

SUMMER DIARY



Beverly Anderson goes on a 'movie crawl' in Manhattan, pays tribute to one of the most remarkable women of the century and tells of the parents who fought off a school merger ... with the aid of a dry rot specialist.

Spielberg springs a nasty shock

Manhattan in July is a good place for a spree with an eight-year-old. There is fast food everywhere and the city is sprinkled with playgrounds, many donated by the Rockefellers, that are well equipped with slides, sandpits, sprinklers and even swimming pools. There is a big one next to the Metropolitan Museum of Art so bargains can be struck as to who will be patient and where and for how long.

But summer in New York is also about air-conditioned movie-houses and it is a major launching time in the States for films aimed at the young. So, without my usual look at reviews, but relying on the Spielberg name and television trailers, I took my son to *Gremlins* and *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*, and got a nasty shock. Both films turned out to be adult horror films - if such a category can be said to exist - and totally unsuitable for children. The Parental Guidance (PG) rating had been an inadequate warning and I found out later that the uproar from American parents over both these films and *Conan the Destroyer* had resulted in a new category, PG13.

Spielberg and company had arranged for their young fans the sights and sounds of an animal being crucified, a man being eaten (noises only, this one) and a microwave oven to kill off attacking monsters, all in the first half of *Gremlins*. The film had been made with young audiences in mind because the shops were full of models, toys, posters and other spin-offs based on the characters. *Indiana Jones* was less monotonously horrific but it included a sequence, cut in the British version, where the villain, an Indian, claws out his victim's heart and then stands chanting with it held, pulsating and dripping, in his hand. The same victim has a long-drawn-out death by roasting and we see the remains of an assistant boddie smeared on a roller after he is crushed to death.

Now I admit to allowing my child to watch a certain amount of nacho

rubbish on the box but I have always drawn the line at torture as entertainment and would have walked out with him, save for the fear that a dramatic exit might add glamour to the whole wretched event. We did see several enjoyable PG movies, with *Splash* and *Ghosts* in particular providing entertainment at several levels, while *Star Trek III* and *The Last Starfighter* were wholesome hokum.

But *Gremlins* and *The Temple of Doom* were worrying. *Gremlins* is due for release here later in the year and I understand that it may not get a PG rating. The British Board of Film Censors apparently decided that *Indiana Jones* could be shown uncut with a 15 rating, but the film company lobbied heavily for it to be given a PG, no doubt with marketing spin-offs in mind as well as audiences.

The board's assistant secretary told me that they feel an obligation to make films available to the widest possible audience as is consistent with their responsibility to the young, so after insisting on some cuts, they released it as a PG. It is worth pointing out that Britain is one of only two countries which refused to allow the uncut version to be shown to young audiences.

I felt sad that the man who made *ET* and *Close Encounters* should have produced such stomach-churning depravity as entertainment for children. Perhaps he needs a sabbatical. I shall approach his *Peter Pan* very warily.

A rare bloom

The BBC2 series *Women of Our Century* went out while I was in the United States but I managed to see the final programme about Dame Janet Vaughan, the distinguished scientist. Having known and admired her for



Indiana Jones ... literally heart-rending.

some time it was good to see some trace of her on film at last. But the programme seemed more like a trailer than a record of her remarkable life. It would have been impossible to condense so rich a career into an hour, much less the 40 minutes allowed, but a different format might have been more satisfying.

We were led at a brisk trot through the chronology of her life by Polly Toynbee, whose sympathetic and capable presence seemed squashed by the brevity of the questions she was able to put. Had the programme focused on say four main topics, a more natural conversational tone could have developed and we might have found out, for instance, in what sense her mother was Virginia Woolf's first love, how it was that a girl dismissed as a dunce got herself into Oxford and the male chauvinist world of pre-war medicine and research, how she combined a brilliant marriage and motherhood with a brilliant career, and how such a person can insist that she is not a feminist.

Feminist or not, Janet Vaughan, who is still working, manages to find the time to encourage other women. On my first morning as an Oxford first school head, just as I was settling behind my desk and the full enormity of the job was seeping in, she arrived, on her way to the laboratory, with a pot of cyclamens in full bloom. Not only a scientist in her eighties, she is a woman of the Eighties.

processions and conduct the singing during marches. And marches and demonstrations there were, four in all, as well as 'phone-ins and letter-writing campaigns, fund-raising parties to pay for the stumps, paper and telephone bills, a wine-and-cheese postcard-writing do, and a publicity-attracting "phantom banner hanger" who went around at night putting up signs in the town centre and along the route of the marches.

The council believed that the economic case for amalgamation was powerful, but the parents on the estate (which does not even have a chip shop, much less a health centre) produced their own report, with expert testimony from a dry-rot specialist, a surveyor and a psychologist who gave evidence on the effects of overcrowding on the children.

They lost crucial votes at various stages on the way to the full council debate, but with the help of councillors - some making round-trip journeys from holidays to vote - they won the battle this month. There was champagne all round, bought with the remains of the fighting fund, and on the coming Bank Holiday they will have a victory float in the local parade. It took them 10 months but even opponents on the council expressed admiration for their ingenuity and tenacity.

The campaign was not only a cheering display of democracy at work and women growing in confidence and skill but evidence of the sort of parental assertiveness state education will need if it is to survive the current political climate.

Gunning for teacher

Pop go the corks

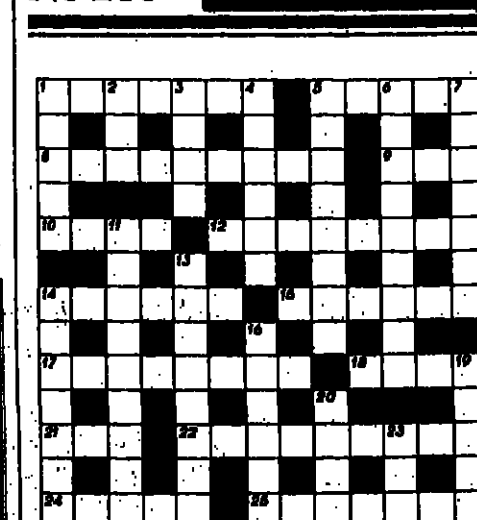
My resignation as head of Barnwood School on Oxford's Barton Estate was, indirectly, the cause of an extraordinary outburst of parent power. There are two first schools on the estate, one at the bottom of the hill and mine at the top. When I left, the county council put forward a scheme to amalgamate the two schools on the top site but reckoned without the parents.

Despite total inexperience at political campaigning they formed an action group last November, helped by the local vicar, who was chairman of the governors at the bottom school, plus a community worker and an actor from the town, whose job was to lead off the

The last week of the summer holiday is a poignant time, even for a "resting" primary teacher like myself. As probationers prepare for their first class and five-year-olds get ready for big school I hope I can be forgiven a nostalgic glance back at my first reception class in East London 15 years ago. The room was awash with new strains, somewhat in need of their departed mums and my helper and I a bit short of lags and arms.

One who sticks in my mind was Jackie, fiercely beautiful, with dark blue eyes and black curls. Other people had Teddies or their thumbs for comfort. Jackie had strapped on her six-guns. I hope the years have treated her kindly, though no doubt she's still giving as good as she gets. To newcomers and veterans alike, best wishes for the coming year's adventure.

No 166 CROSSWORD by Rufus



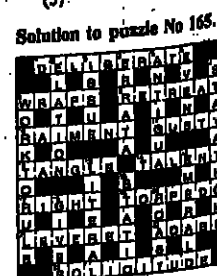
Across

- 15 Public school teacher upst. about hours being changed (12)
- 8 A share in the plot (9)
- 9 Some notice a sign of serves (3)
- 10 It's always the dream of the French to return (4)
- 12 Indeed not all went (8)
- 14 Starchy food dad is about to turn to (6)
- 15 A new bride's bits and pieces (6)
- 17 This plant requires

Down

- 1 Do impressive work as a huntsman? (5)
- 18 A much revered figure out of work, we hear (4)
- 21 Social worker (3)
- 22 She cleans out for the steward (9)
- 24 Enquire in the back-street for job (5)
- 25 They may indicate corporal punishment (7)

- 2 A law breaking instrument (3)
- 3 Adds up the number of infants (4)
- 4 Staggered, but got in line (6)
- 5 One has a lot of trouble getting into this (3,5)
- 6 Badly turned out, being ignorant (9)
- 7 Doesn't make a message plain (7)
- 11 Come in, it's not an infectious disease (9)
- 13 Not professors of divinity, evidently (8)
- 14 Brilliant spectacle opening up over Bhai, perhaps (7)
- 16 One lashed words of evil (5)
- 19 Calms and sends to sleep (5)
- 20 Holy man turns to a king and emperor (4)
- 23 Joint invitation to cheer (3)



Solution to puzzle No 165.

THE TIMES Educational Supplement

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16-plus plans worry GCE boards

by Susannah Kirkman

The GCE boards are becoming increasingly uneasy about Sir Keith Joseph's 16-plus proposals. They feel that the Education Secretary has not allowed enough time or money for the development of national grade criteria: new syllabuses and assessment systems.

In a letter to Sir Keith, Mr John Day, secretary general to the Associated Examining Board, says the present schedule will make heavy demands on the board's committees, advisers, examiners and staff, as well as upon teachers.

He points out that the boards have only nine or ten months to publish the first new examination syllabuses after

the grade-related criteria and assessment systems are announced in July or August 1985.

At the same time, the O and A level exams will have to continue as usual. Mr Day also voices fears that lack of money will hamper the new exam. The syllabuses call for more practical work and tests, as well as moderation for internal exams and differentiated papers, yet no extra funding has been announced. The boards are worried that they may have to double their fees to cope with the costs.

They are also concerned about the future of further education students and private candidates under the new arrangements.

More than 30,000 candidates taking correspondence courses or studying abroad might not be able to meet the practical requirements of the 16-plus because of the course work element in the new exam which must be internally assessed.

The 16-plus could cause "severe problems" for mature students who might not have access to the facilities needed for practical course work, or who wished to take subjects exclusive to O level, such as law, which has no CSE equivalent.

Along with the other GCE boards, the AEB is pressing for CSE boards to operate an "open market" and allow

schools outside their region to enter candidates. Up to now, the CSE boards have insisted on maintaining their catchment areas.

But with the run-up to General Certificate of Secondary Examination, joint O level and CSE exams are becoming increasingly popular. And schools want to be able to pick and choose from the joint courses being developed by the boards.

GCE boards are anxious that schools should choose syllabuses and exams on merit. They want to develop free choice before CGSE arrives so that they can corner their own shares of the 16-plus market.

Sanctions threatened by NUT

by Mike Durham

Professor Eric Armstrong, chairman of the teachers' pay arbitration panel, said this week that he was not aware of plans to resume industrial action on Monday if the pay award had not been announced.

The National Union of Teachers said last month that it would resume sanctions on September 3, the beginning of the new school term in most areas. In protest at what it alleges were delays by the management in presenting their evidence.

The sanctions, which would include refusal to cover for absent colleagues and withdrawal of "goodwill" activities, would be lifted as soon as the arbitration award was announced.

As *The TES* went to press there was no indication that the arbitration panel's findings would be made public by the deadline.

Professor Armstrong, who is professor of industrial relations at Manchester Business School, declined to comment on the progress of the panel's work on Wednesday.

He claimed he was "not aware" of the NUT threat to resume industrial action. "I haven't heard anything about that. I have not been told about it or seen any reports about it."

Professor Armstrong said the arbitrators were not conscious of being "pressurized". He added: "There is considerable interest being shown in this and I can assure you we are not being dilatory in our efforts to get a result."

Teacher to ride shuttle

From Peter David in Washington

President Reagan plans to give the image of teachers an astronomical boost by allowing a teacher to become the first civilian passenger to take a shuttle ride into space.

An appropriate high-flier, selected from a primary or secondary school, will make the trip in 1985 or 1986. "When that shuttle lifts off all of America will be reminded of the crucial role teachers and education play in the life of our nation," the president said on Monday. "I can't think of a better lesson for our children and our country."

Mr James Beggs, head of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), said he hoped a teacher would do as much for the image of the space programme as space would do for the image of teaching. He said NASA favoured a teacher because a teacher should be able to stimulate the interest of young people in space.

"This agency lives and dies by whether we can attract top talent and keep the kids interested in the programme," he said.

College hopefuls face toughest yet scramble for places

by David Lister and Hilary Wilce

A level candidates who have failed to get the grades needed for university are finding it tougher than ever to secure an alternative route into higher education.

Polytechnic telephones have, according to one harassed inquiry officer, been going "absolutely berserk". And most institutions are reporting an increase of 30 to 40 per cent on inquiries this time last year.

But applicants are being squeezed by two new developments in the annual scramble for college places. For the first time polytechnics and institutes of higher education have had to stick to strict intake targets laid down by the National Advisory Body, while many of this year's school leavers cautiously applied early for courses and many popular ones, particularly in the fields of business studies, computer studies and graphic design, have been full since the spring.

Where there are vacancies, colleges can afford to be highly selective about who they consider and they report that the general standard of applicants is up on last year. Tessaide Polytechnic, says happily that "business is buoyant" while Preston Polytechnic (from tomorrow to be called Lancashire Polytechnic) reports approaches from desperate callers willing to consider any course at all rather than go on the dole.

The latest information from the Advanced Further Education Information Service, which monitors course vacancies, shows there are considerable numbers of places still available on engineering courses of all kinds, and some maths, computing and business studies vacancies. Elsewhere, however, mere handfuls of courses are still open to applicants.

Places for BED courses are still available, although the Central Register and Clearing House reports a reduction on the level of places available compared with this time last year. The exception are shortage subject places, in maths and science, which are still widely available.

Mr David Moore, principal of Nelson and Colne tertiary college, Lancashire, told *The TES* that in nearly 20 years as principal he had never known so tough a year for A level candidates. One girl with four A levels, including one grade A, was still uncertain of getting into university. "If you're a grade down on your conditional offer this year, you're unlikely to get a place," he said.

UCCA, the Universities Central Council for Admissions, was still processing applications this week, and a full picture is yet to emerge.

A level grades plan, page 5

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Catch 'em young

Sarah Bayliss visits a new centre that has brought sport to all the children in the neighbourhood.

Block out

Chief education officers are looking out to council treasurers over finance.

Platform

In the first of two articles, Leicestershire head Timothy Rogers reflects on the architect

of the county's educational reputation.

Battle dress

How schools lose out in the fight for uniform that hides those of the wearer.

Book at bedtime

Story-telling parents dramatically improve their child's grasp of language.

Arts/Books

Barbara Crowther on Graham Greene as a screenwriter; David Wright on James Joyce and his patrons; Kenny Mathieson at the Edinburgh Festival; Hugh David at the National Youth Theatre; Linda Joffe on schooling in Japan; Philip Jacobson on Fidel Castro; Joan Freeman on bringing up girls; History textbooks.

Resources/Media

Paul Turtin reviews two projects for religious education; Wendy Body recommends books for reluctant readers; Prabhu Gupta reviews a pack of materials from the Open University on Buddhism and Hinduism; Victoria Neumark reviews a television series on alternative life-styles; Susan Thomas on video programmes about money.



Dame Janet Vaughan ... in 40-minute television programme would do her justice.

Mr Young's latest ploy

A sense of excitement and purpose

In 1970, Arthur moved into London as Chief Inspector for Teacher Training. It was an exciting period. The Committee of Enquiry into Teacher

It all comes back to a few basic facts: that the English secondary education system and the ex-

There are many other points worth commenting on. The report has a lot to say about who should pay the cost of education and training and, like Training for Skill, it clearly thinks the bill should be picked up by industry and by individual trainees in the form of low training allowances. Here, too, the IMS is telling the Government what it wants to hear. Such advice is always regarded as unusually wise.

Double top takes all

tions of marks gained by candidates. Its subsequent endorsement by a Schools Council Joint Working Party in the form of a 20-point-grading scheme cut little ice by the time universities and colleges had analysed its effect on admission procedures. In AUGUST

Union challenges I.e.a. warning to Bradford race row head

by Bert Lodge

the education committee, confirmed

Mr Hart, a former solicitor, said he was waiting to hear from the Bradford authority about a date for a hearing, the next stage in the disciplinary procedure, at which he would represent Mr Honeysford.

Stoke score with matchday scheme

Criticism of the report was widespread for its "ineffectual proposals" particularly that the Football Associa-

The scheme was inaugurated in October, 1983, on the visit of Coventry to Stoke.

Concern at science research

Lack of cash is driving young scientists and engineers as well as older academics abroad in search of posts with adequate research funds, says a study group set up by the Science and Engineering Research Council.

Reduced grants from the University Grants Committee mean that there are fewer staff and that the money has to be used to buy basic equipment.



'Don't back miners' call

Mrs Helen Gardener (pictured above), general secretary for the teachers' group and an NAS/WT member, has asked Mr Fred Smithies and Mr Doug McAvoy not to commit their members to strike action or a levy in support of the National Union of

The NASUWT, as the first teaching union to gain affiliated status in the TUC, "should not sign away its party political independence" by showing support for the NUM, Mrs Gardener wrote. She suggested the teaching unions should encourage the miners to return to work so that the coal industry can become "a contributor to the national exchequer"

Susannah Kirkman
on research about
youngsters and
the arms race

Fears rise about nuclear conflict

Professor Tizard thinks teachers should not discuss the issue with under-16s. "You can't really have the individual responsiveness to what the

How American television imagines a Kansas town would look after a nuclear attack. A scene from the film *The Day After* shown in Britain last year.

To break down the "identification of patriotism with belligerence", Profes-

Increasing children's knowledge and into different teaching approaches is essential, "if we are to encourage clear thinking".

NAB figures say public sector numbers will rise again in 85-86

2.7% limit set for HE student increase

by Karen Gold

back to the NAB, they showed an increase in projected total members for three reasons: lower wastage rates in recent years (attributed partly to intakes of more highly qualified stu-

ceeded a 2 per cent rise: since that is unlikely to be less than 2.5 per cent, the unit of resource will be reduced by at least 5 per cent with the extra 2.7 per cent of students included. — *THEE*

Sadly, the committee's report is probably most remembered for its recognition of the need for drastic reductions in the size of the training system. Throughout the remainder of Arthur Luffman's career as Chief Inspector and those of us who



Arthur Luffman

But the recommendations of the James Report for In-Service Training were those which, most of all, provided the answer.

Pauline Perry is Chief Inspector for Teacher Training

no comment

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PRIMARY

Sarah Bayliss visits a sports centre with a difference, both in design and in its objective of getting all children to believe in and use their own physical potential

All the games a child could want - under one big roof

Something weird and wonderful has landed at Paddington Green, London W2.

It is a huge, cocoon-like structure in light khaki green, laid in between a high rise council estate and an old church yard just off the Edgware Road. The local vernacular dubs it "The Tent" or "The Zeppelin"; architects call it a Spandrell Structure; but to hundreds of children aged 5 to 12 living nearby it is "our sports centre".

The Westminster Children's Sports Centre is a remarkable venture, unusual in Britain. The size of five badminton courts, it offers almost every sport imaginable to children so young they have barely started school. The choice is awesome: volleyball, badminton, gymnastics, trampolining, mini-basketball, tennis, cricket and hockey.

Its official opening, to be attended by Government ministers and Westminster councillors, is not until October. But since the doors were opened in April, 500 children have registered and a core of 50 to 60 have attended virtually every day of the long hot holiday.

Inside it is light, cool and airy; there is nothing oppressive or cavernous about it, unlike many conventional sports centres which cost three times as much to build. "It's a lovely environment for children to be in and they are responding... it was a perfect choice," said Wendy Titman, director of the Westminster Play Association whose brainchild it is.

The WPA is the largest voluntary play organization in the country, with a history going back 15 years or more. It is a registered charity and, as an agent for Westminster City Council, provides and manages all types of supervised play facility for 5 to 12-year-olds in the heart of the capital. Adventure playgrounds, after-school care schemes, dance classes, computer "camps" and water sports have all been pioneered by the WPA.

Sadly, its grant from Westminster Council has been cut severely more than once; although authorities from all over the country are applying to visit the new sports centre, Shirley Porter, Westminster's leader, has not yet been there.

It was on adventure playgrounds that the WPA first recognized the need for organized sport. "We could see many young children lacked coordination," said Wendy Titman, "and although they were mad keen to do sports, whenever we tried it they weren't very good. No one had taught them how to catch a ball or how to hold a racket; the average child had never been on a trampoline, except perhaps at Budlins, but there was always a resounding 'yes' whenever we offered it."

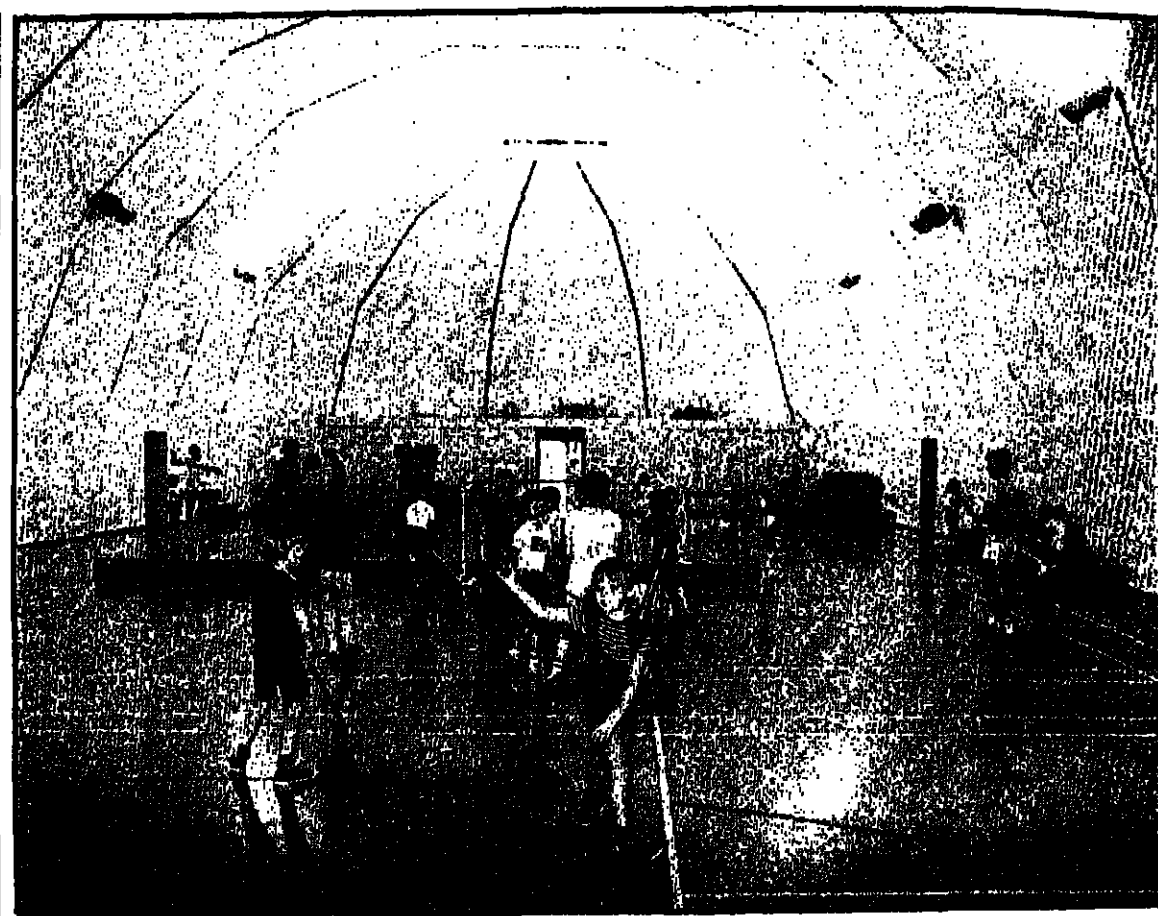
Four years ago to meet the children's demand WPA began to hire space in sports centres and school halls for organized sports after school or during the holidays. But within two years things had got out of hand; the demand was too great, the costs were too high and the facilities were too limited for young children in terms of time and space. "We found ourselves competing for space against stockbrokers who wanted a quick game of badminton before catching the train home."

The design of other people's buildings was all wrong too. "Very rarely, if ever, are young children taken into account when sports centres are being built," said Ms Titman. "If you build toilets and wash-hand basins and door handles at adult height you tend to get what grown-ups call vandalism. We don't believe it's vandalism - it's a practical expression of children's difficulty in coping with areas built for larger human beings."

A special subcommittee was set up with experts from the Sports Council and elsewhere, to look at the issues that had been uncovered. Very soon, according to Ms Titman, it was saying "We'll bloody well build our own places."

By happy coincidence the WPA had agreed a few years earlier "against our better judgment" to take over a council-run adventure playground that had failed miserably. It was a no-man's land, designed by a landscape architect, ignored by children, unpopular with parents and frequented most by tramps and winos. That was the place to transform.

Then, 18 months ago, Wendy Titman heard on the grapevine that the Department of Environment's Urban Programme was underspent. Funds which had to be spent by March 31 were available. Within weeks the design for a centre was chosen - a lightweight aluminium frame, covered with PVC, classed as a "permanent structure". The application was sent to Marsham Street and on the last day of



out that hitch, it would have taken five months instead of 10 to complete. Throughout that period WPA staff were driven on by their confidence in children's potential. Gilda Francois, the centre's sports organizer who has worked in the area for several years, is not alone in condemning the waste of talent in primary schools.

She said: "There's hardly anyone to teach sport, for a start, because all the students go into secondary schools when it's too late anyway to teach basic skills. So the kids get beanbags and hoops. If they're lucky there's a netball for the girls, and football for the boys, rounders in summer and athletics on Sports Day."

According to Wendy Titman, "A lot of kids are labelled at school as not being very good at sport. We believe it's not that they're not very good, it's that they've never been taught."

Both women quickly dismiss accusations that they are on the lookout for future Olympians, and hate to be identified with the "sports excellence brigade".

Ms Titman said: "In the end we'd

been open six days a week for two sessions a day, each almost three hours long. During term-time children can come for one or two sessions after school from 3.30 to 8pm and parents can join in "family night" on Wednesdays. One session costs 30p, two cost 50p. The pricing policy is carefully worked out: "We know that some could pay a lot more but there are others who would disappear the minute the cost went up," said Ms Titman.

The area contains social extremes; mixed in with children from the tower blocks there are those from the comfortable mansion flats of St John's Wood with a nanny to pick them up at the end of the day. But virtually none of the children has a garden.

For the first two hours in a session children are offered 30 minutes each on four sports, with the choice changing every day. In the last 45 minutes each child can pick his or her favourite sport. Sometimes there is 30 minutes of "potted games", an entertaining combination of training exercises such as dribbling a ball, throwing or passing it. At the end of each session they

the centre. "When I came here I couldn't hit the shuttlecock. I didn't know what it was, even. I'm really good at it now. I'm working for a badge on trampolining and I play mini-tennis and gymnastics. There's Lee and John from my school and Dawn and Charlie. Loads of us come here. My mum says it's worth 50p because I'm here all the time and she can get on with her work at home."

Alexander, who will be seven next month, is as keen as Joanne but staff point him out as one of a small number who have made "astonishing progress". Socially he is a different child from the shy boy who arrived in April, he has lost weight and is well coordinated. His mother, Mrs Myra Hayter, an antiques dealer from St John's Wood, said the headmistress of his prep school had commented on the change. "He is more sociable, less volatile, and calmer," she said.

Mrs Hayter had believed Alexander was hyperactive. "He's always been lively and intelligent but his boundless energy was a problem. Suddenly he's got somewhere to burn off that energy and enjoy himself. He's pretty hot at hockey and enjoys everything else. It's a wonderful outlet for a town boy like him, with no garden to play in."

Ross Harman, a busy little Cockney with a mini-hockey stick in one hand, said: "It's good here, I like all sports. His manner was straightforward - as if everyone felt the same as he did. His family lives in a tower block overlooking the sports centre. His father, Ken Harman, is a printer working long hours in a small publishing house."

"Ross is over the moon with sports and the centre is just marvellous for him," he said. "I take him over on Saturdays as well and watch him play. He is really cooped up here and yet he's a very active boy."

Ross is already showing remarkable talent at mini-tennis and his potential poses a big question for staff and the centre. So far their policy has not been to offer intensive coaching - they haven't got the funds even if they wanted to. But watching Ross's rapid development over a matter of months has prompted them to look at ways of handling special coaching. Local club coaches are being offered space to train at the centre if they also include local children. And in the autumn a study day will be held with club governors to see how else they can help each other.

"We knew the potential was there," said Wendy Titman, "but this has been an absolute eye-opener. Our biggest poser is knowing what to do with a child like Ross. Perhaps some tennis clubs would say they'd welcome him. Our experience in the past has been that they're just not geared for little ones."

He certainly couldn't reach the tops to wash his hands... Joanne Freeman, aged eight and a regular attendee since April, boomed a broad smile when asked why she liked



Gilda Francois, sports organizer, and customers Joanne Freeman - "I'm working for a badge on trampolining" - and Ross Harman - "over the moon with sports".



the financial year approval was granted. "The beauty of the building was that it had a guaranteed fixed cost; the Urban Programme can't handle the ifs and buts of a long conventional building programme," said Wendy Titman.

With £168,000 granted by the DOE, the WPA had the building in its grasp but equipment worth £70,000 had to be acquired if a full range of sports was to be offered and every child kitted out. Over 10 months commerce was coaxed (C&A, the department store, gave £1,000), interest groups were courted (The Lords Taverners are supplying all the cricket gear), and the Sports Council noted generously. There was a crisis last autumn when the company designing and building the centre went into liquidation with

like the kids to be able to enjoy a game of badminton with friends. But unless you start them young they get self-conscious. At this age," she said gesturing to the hall full of 50 children aged eight on average but ranging from 5 to 12 and all shapes and sizes, "they can join in and make mistakes and aren't too afraid of making fools of themselves."

An early start is especially important for girls who get inhibited about their bodies. With both sexes an early start can also mean the development of "cooperation" rather than "competition". "It all seems good natured... We're exploding all those ridiculous myths about the need for competition in sport," Ms Titman said.

play "mass games" - a complex game of "tag", for example, which all children play together.

There are seven sportworkers including Gilda Francois, and most are trained teachers of physical education. In addition there are two experts in trampolining and gymnastics who are paid by the hour.

Groups of around 10 children work with a different member of staff for each half hour; they play concentratedly with the teacher as well as with each other. Inevitably, some of the time children are waiting for their turn with the teacher, but they stand in an orderly line, talking quietly and watching, or sit cross-legged on the floor.

SCHOOL TO WORK

Why ailing Britain needs a good VET

Research shows that the UK must restructure its vocational education and training to compete in world markets. Mike Durham reports.

Major changes will have to be made in vocational education and training if Britain is to compete successfully in world markets, according to a report published this week.

Competence and Competition, by a research team from the Institute of Manpower Studies at Sussex University, says more stress should be laid on flexibility and self-reliance among young trainees.

It also recommends a programme to achieve high levels of attainment in core subjects - the 3 Rs - and a greater contribution from employers on vocational training after school.

The report was commissioned jointly by the National Economic Development Council and the Manpower Services Commission. Its authors, Chris Hayes, Alan Anderson and Nickie Fonda, compare Britain's vocational education and training (VET) policies

with those of its main economic competitors - West Germany, the United States and Japan.

Each country, they report, has developed its own vocational training programmes to suit its culture and history. But, they say, Britain can learn valuable lessons from the comparisons.

The report says Britain is the only one of the four in which most 16-year-olds leave school in search of a job without being offered any further vocational education.

In West Germany, over 65 per cent of school-leavers enter VET, either in a joint state-employer sponsored "dual system".

In America, VET is offered to most high school students and there exists a "vast non-system" of public and private colleges, "trade schools" and on-the-job schemes.

The authors say that in Japan "the thrust for education is obvious... Japan has, in a single generation, become a mass higher education nation". But the Japanese system emphasizes lifelong education rather than vocational training.

The report spells out that to achieve effective performance at work - not, traditionally, one of the aims of education in Britain - "flexibility and self-reliance need to be recognised as objectives".

In all the other countries, govern-

ment takes a less important role in vocational training, while employers and trade unions take more responsibility than they do in Britain.

An unexpected finding was the importance of the "pro-active" role expected of, and by, individuals in other countries. Among 24 recommendations for "reinvigorating" Britain's VET system, the authors suggest:

- At least 85 per cent of school-leavers should reach "acceptable standards" in a core curriculum including the 3Rs;
- 16 and 17-year-olds should be withdrawn from the labour market and offered a qualification relevant to their work;
- UK should aim to enable 80 per cent of young people to enter employment

at 18 with a qualification relevant to their employment:

- The Youth Training Scheme should be more occupation-orientated;
- Employers should take the lead in providing vocational training, accrediting courses, and ensuring that work experience schemes are relevant;
- Trade unions should be more active in helping with training and work experience schemes; and
- There should be no falling off on public expenditure on VET despite the recession while spending by employers and individuals themselves should be increased.

An individual's "pro-active" role is also stressed. The report says: "The time has come for individuals to see that their desire for learning is relevant to their employment roles."

Individuals need to be better informed about how vocational training can help them get work and be more competent in a job. "The education service and the media could show individuals the rewards - both economic and qualitative - of reliance on one's own efforts and of using learning at work." Individuals would then take on more responsibility for their own vocational education and invest time and money in their own futures.

Among Britain's major competitors, the report says, qualities such as team work, flexibility and the desire to learn are explicitly included as part of vocational education and training programmes.

But in Britain, it claims, "the tendency is to regard these as 'personal qualities' rather than vocational outcomes."

Competence and Competition: Training and Education in the Federal Republic of Germany, the United States and Japan, available from NEDO Books, NEDO, Millbank Tower, Millbank, London SW1P 4QX, price £6.50.

United States

Shaping their own destiny

The United States is still "the land of opportunity" where individuals are expected to shape their own destinies, and success is measured in dollars, says the report.

The VET system reflects this, with little involvement of the Federal Government. The process is a "vast non-system" with schools, 1,300 two-year colleges, 3,000 four-year colleges, thousands of "trade schools" and "in-house employers" schemes all contributing to the picture.

In any one year 15 million young and adult Americans are on vocational courses in schools and vocational centres, with 6 million on off-the-job courses run by employers. Most high school students go on to higher education or training and VET is highly valued.

Americans expect to "pay" for vocational training although employers often cover tuition fees and award grants. Employers often expect employees to train in their own time.

West Germany

A dual system

With West Germany's traditions of discipline and hard work, the VET system is well organized. Its aim is that "every person entering the labour market should be occupationally competent and qualified," says the report.

At 15-plus nearly 70 per cent of school-leavers go into an apprenticeship and 20 per cent on to higher education. There are 450,000 "approved training firms" offering a choice of 439 recognized training occupations.

Under a "dual system" employers provide the training and regional governments provide block release colleges. Employers pay 80 per cent of the cost. In 1980 the cost of initial VET was £6.9 billion - about £113 per head of the population.

Japan

Developing the 'whole person'

In Japan the "thrust for education" is obvious with a high participation rate. Specialization is avoided at all levels. Emphasis is on the education of the "whole person".

There is no compulsory vocational training at school and employers from an over-specialized training. They prefer "socialized, adaptable 'blank sheets'... conflict between what education provides and what industry needs is almost non-existent. There is less concern with what applicants know than with their willingness and ability to learn."

The Japanese spend 10 per cent of their national income on education. Yet school and college training can be very expensive to individuals or their families.

Most vocational training begins at work with the private sector making the biggest contribution. There is a massive emphasis on on-the-job training and organizational flexibility.

Group working, quality control circles and job rotations are all encouraged. "They explain much of Japan's ability to adjust to change in product markets."

Careers Diary



by Brian Heap

A new booklet "Graduates and Jobs" (HMSO £2.20), circulated by the DES to all schools is a publication which should be carefully scrutinized by all subject teachers as well as pupils intending to apply for places in higher education.

Time rarely permits teachers preparing students for A levels to look beyond the syllabus and into undergraduate courses and employment thereafter, but both these elements are important to the university, polytechnic or college applicant.

The booklet reports that some school and degree courses offer little help to the student in finding a job after graduation, and for a number of students three years in full-time employment appears more beneficial for their future careers than a similar period at university.

Qualifications in medicine, accounting, electrical engineering (including electronics), civil and mechanical engineering, mathematics and computer science, business studies, economics and law are listed as most useful in terms of employability - with philosophy and zoology the least.

Trouble at State Mill...

by Sue Ashby

Rochdale State Mill Education and Training Unit, which received large-scale funding from the Manpower Services Commission in June, has run into trouble with the National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education.

Jobs for two training designers, a counsellor and two open learning tutors, advertised at the beginning of August, have been blocked by the union and are now the subject of an official dispute because of a refusal by the Rochdale local education authority to employ staff for the unit - an old mill which has been turned into a training centre - on the nationally agreed conditions of service for further education lecturers.

The authority, which received a request from NATFHE last week to meet a national delegation, is telling applicants that the posts are not lecturer posts in the traditional sense, that the unit would have to open for 50

weeks a year, and that under the present budget it cannot afford to appoint cover for full-time staff holidays under FE conditions of service.

Conditions quoted by Rochdale further education department to applicants include a 36½ hour week, five weeks annual holiday, and teaching hours for the posts of open learning tutors that will be "informally arranged".

Mr Peter Blackmore, Rochdale's deputy chief education officer, said that the authority was not discussing terms of contracts or conditions of service until the interviews were held.

"Of course there is nothing rigid about the conditions of service," he says, "they are negotiable - but if candidates insist that they work under further education conditions of service we are not interested. We want people who are flexible and willing to change."

He said he wanted to attract people from professions other than education

and that "Applicants from commerce and industry could be put off from applying for the jobs unless they find working hours similar to those they are used to."

Rochdale was not recruiting cheap labour, he said, and referred to salaries offered - equivalent to Burnham lecturer 2 for the open learning tutor and counsellor posts, and to Burnham senior lecturer for the training designer posts.

"Our careers staff here see the counsellor's salary as very attractive. They all want to apply for the job."

Mr Jimmy Munney, assistant secretary of NATFHE, said that the union's officers were seeking to clarify with Rochdale which of the posts advertised were FE posts. "We are not seeking to change administrative jobs to further education jobs, but if the State Mill unit has to operate 50 weeks a year we have agreements to cover FE staff working there," he said.

Personnel managers voice concern at introduction of CPVE

Fears YTS may be blocked



Opportunities for extending YTS may be undermined by the introduction of the proposed Certificate of Pre-Vocational Education, according to the Institute of Personnel Management.

The Institute, in its comments on the consultative document published by the Joint Board for Pre-Vocational Education, advocates the extension of YTS courses to two years. But it fears that the CPVE, which is also aimed at 16-year-olds, may undermine this objective by competing for students and resources.

While welcoming certain features of the CPVE programme, the Institute is concerned that in being offered as a school or college course, the CPVE will be viewed as a "safe" and "respectable" alternative to YTS.

"Young people and their advisers need to be made fully aware of the differences between YTS and CPVE

made available to all school pupils. Parts of CPVE are essentially pre-vocational.

As a result, the Institute suggests that CPVE programmes should be offered to pupils before they complete their compulsory education, perhaps at 14. Schools must not neglect to provide wider opportunities for pupils, believing that their needs can be catered for post-16.

The Institute stresses the urgent need for coordinating YTS and CPVE and, indeed, calls on the Joint Board to determine policies, in association with other interested parties, which promote integration and rationalization of education provision in the 14-18 age group as a whole.

CPVE will be yet another programme which employers will be asked to support by offering work experience placements.

Courses

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NEWS

Treasurers gain power at expense of CEOs

by Mike Durham

Chief education officers have "lost ground" to local authority treasurers as local government finance has become more complicated, according to a new study soon to be published by the Institute of Education.

The report, *Education and the New Block Grant*, also claims that education officers and councillors do not know enough about the details of the Government's rate support system. It describes knowledge of grant mechanisms as "patchy".

The survey is based on interviews with chief officers and members of six representative L.E.A.s.

Financial pressures coupled with the sheer complexity of the block grant system have strengthened the hand of town hall finance officers compared with educationists, the report says. Increasingly, local treasurers have gained in status because of their ability to understand the system and explain it. They have proved more able to steer councils through times of uncertainty, and to supply the accountability "know-how".

Councillors have come to rely on treasurers rather than education officers to help them achieve policy goals because of their skill at "creative accountancy" and their role as an "interpreter" of the Government's regulations.

At the same time, decisions in local government have become more overtly "political", with smaller groups of senior councillors assuming more important policy-making roles.

Leading local government politicians had recognized the need, in a more severe financial climate, to channel limited resources into the highest priority political objectives. Chief education officers needed to be aware

of this. Education officers, the report says, "need to regain the influence lost to the financial interests". It also recommends that education officers should be clear about their own priorities - and to make politicians aware of them early on - in the light of the more "political" atmosphere of local government.

Chief education officers' knowledge of the block grant system is "patchy", the report says. Four of the six CEOs interviewed had a good grasp of the system's finer details, but two considered it was "not relevant".

"Familiarity with block grant terminology is certainly necessary for today's CEO in any negotiations with finance colleagues," the report says.

It goes on to recommend that every CEO should be "conversant" with the small print of block grant regulations, particularly education GRE - the sum of money which the Government calculates each L.E.A. should spend to maintain an adequate education service.

Most of the treasurers interviewed for the survey admitted they did not routinely pass on to CEOs information about their education GREs - but two of the CEOs declared they were not themselves interested in the GRE details because they were "not relevant" to budgetary decisions.

The report calls for more information of this sort to be made available both to chief officers and to the public.

But the decision-makers who know least about local government finance are the councillors, including members and even some chairmen of education committees, according to the report. "Officers, and treasurers in particular, considered that the ordinary mem-

ber had no need to understand the system and probably couldn't anyway," says the report.

Says one county treasurer: "The block grant has forced members into the situation of taking political decisions in a state of incomprehension."

One chief education officer told the report's authors that education committee members "wouldn't know a GRE from a GCE".

Even those chief officers and senior councillors who had not got a grasp of the system felt ordinary members did not need to know the details because a full understanding of the complexities was "irrelevant" to the decisions they had to make.

Among other recommendations to chief education officers and chairmen in the light of the block grant system, the report says L.E.A.s should try to ensure that spending on specific government initiatives is excluded from block grant calculations and does not incur penalties.

But it says education officers should resist the temptation to let local concerns override "wider aspirations for an equitable national education service".

Government education administrators, it says, should reconsider their views on the way priorities are determined at a local level. The Government's concept of "feedback" is "too simplistic and ignores the political environment and nature of local decision-making".

Education and the New Block Grant, by Alan Crispin, Francis Marsden-Wilson and Caroline Bridges. London: University Institute of Education, 59 Gordon Square, London WC1H 0NT for further information.



Hair-raising experience

A sixth-former gets to grips with a powerful charge of static electricity from a Van de Graaff generator at Gorton Comprehensive in Gorseinon, West Glamorgan. The photograph is one of a selection by John Harris, a former teacher, who is to exhibit them under the title, "Gorton - Portrait of a Comprehensive School", at Clydach Teachers' Centre, Swansea, from September 10.

PHOTO REPORT

New York, Summer 1984
Below the demilitarized zone separating the Bronx from Manhattan, lies Washington Heights, a patchwork of decaying housing projects and abandoned cars. George Washington High School is the neighbourhood's pride - the teachers like to remind graduating Greek, black and Puerto Rican students that Henry Kissinger is an alumnus of the place. But their lasting impression is of armed police patrolling dimly-lit corridors to keep a lid on the warfare that exploded two years ago between rival drug syndicates.

TEXT/PHOTOS BY JUDAH PASSOW

Right, the High School yearbook - to have and to hold. Below, after graduation... what next? Far right, what every parent wants to see.



Biddy Passmore reports on a small art school's fight for survival

When one course keeps a college open

Falmouth School of Art has won the support of leading politicians and figures in the art world in its fight to stay open and stay unique.

The small art college, which lies on a beautiful site on the south coast of Cornwall, is the only publicly-funded institution in the country to concentrate exclusively on fine art.

It has therefore attracted the unwelcome attention of the National Adv-

isory Body for local authority higher education.

In its attempt to rationalize art and design education, NAB has written to all institutions offering only one advanced course in the subject asking how they would react to closing the course next year or using it as the basis of a larger centre for art and design education. One course on its own, NAB argues, is academically at risk; it is also

expensive.

But Falmouth is the only one of the 25 or so institutions involved where closing the course would mean closing the school. Out of its 230 students, 130 take the three-year BA in Fine Arts; the rest are either 18-year-olds doing a one-year foundation course or younger students taking a non-advanced DATEC course.

Mr Ian Carrick, the acting principal, has replied angrily to the NAB letter, stressing the high quality of work at the 87-year-old school and the successful record of its graduates, more than a fifth of whom have gone on to post-graduate work in the last five years. He has also complained that NAB gave the school only six weeks to prepare its response.

Mr Carrick said this week that powerful figures in the political and art world had written to him pledging their support for the school and promising to write to Sir Keith Joseph, the Education Secretary. Cornwall education authority has written to NAB to protest about the threat of closure.

"We can't deny that we're geographically isolated although we would

deny that our students suffer from it."

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The alternative to closure suggested by NAB - that Falmouth might be "built into a larger centre" - is just as strongly resisted by the school. The staff understand it would mean merging with Cornwall College of Further and Higher Education, 12 miles across the neck of land near the North coast at Camborne.

"We'd certainly like to grow where we are, but not by means of a merger," Mr Carrick said. "We'd like to grow on the unique campus we have." Falmouth was not opposed to developing a design course but it was hard to think of one linked to local needs, he added.

The technical graphics course at Camborne and the Fine Arts course at Falmouth were "poles apart", Mr Carrick said. "If we lose our uniqueness, our recruitment will go too. We'll become just like any other course anywhere else in the country."

Race study 'inadequate'

Fifty students who completed a Post-graduate Certificate of Education course at Sussex University in July signed a petition demanding that the course should do far more to combat racism among teachers.

They acknowledged that the course, in offering a three-day conference on the subject, did more than most courses to look at the problems. But "for a course which claims to offer the conditions whereby theory and practice can feed off each other this is grossly inadequate. The question of racism has remained largely invisible and dealing with race and education, three days at the end of the course, after assessment exercises have been submitted, has the effect of marginalizing the issue - a question of institutional racism".

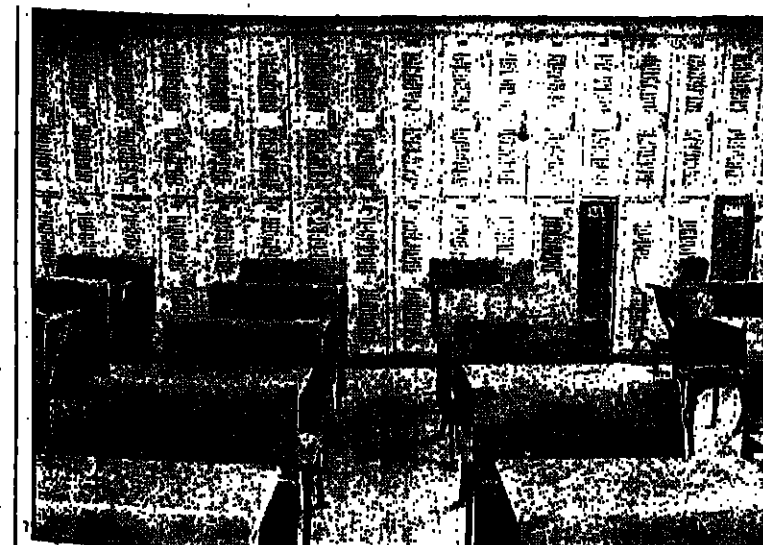
Mr Neville West, the course director, said the points raised by students would be incorporated in discussions about programme planning. It was a very serious area, which was already a significant part of the course. "One of the problems with the PGCE is that it is only a year long, and how do you get a quart into a pint pot?"

He also resented the idea of a petition, he said. "It puts out a message of conflict, when there absolutely was not any such conflict." The ideas had been discussed fruitfully between himself and the students, he said.

Teachers should be trained to fight racism, says the National Association for Multiracial Education in a new document published this week. Every teacher is morally responsible for promoting equality and justice in all aspects of education, says the association, which describes multicultural education as "tokenism" and based on a rationale of cultural disadvantage and racial tolerance.

Detailed proposals on how teachers, students and colleges can combat racism are contained in "Teacher Education: a statement by NAME", available from R. A. Braunholz, City of Birmingham Polytechnic, Westbourne Road, Birmingham B15 3TN.

CLASS OF EIGHTY-FOUR



Henry Kissinger sat here



Steel reinforced doors at the main entrance. No more war



Final exams



Outside the school gates - Mean Streets



The last illicit cigarette

History should make pupils proud - Sir Keith

by Hilary Wilce

History teaching should foster in pupils a sense of pride in Britain and its achievements, according to Sir Keith Joseph, the Secretary of State for Education and Science.

British history should be central to the history syllabus taught in English schools, and should lead schoolchildren to decide "which aspects of national events, institutions or culture are most deserving of admiration".

But that does not mean pupils should be given an uncritical "nationalist" approach to their country's history, Sir Keith told a conference of American historians in Berkeley, California, re-

cently. And they should put their country's past into a wider context.

"The apocryphal newspaper headline 'Fog in Channel - Continent Isolated' may convey the stage Englishman's view of the outside world, but the fact that it has entered the national store of humour shows that the statement's absurdity is appreciated".

Sir Keith said there were four main principles which should govern history teaching:

● Pupils should be left with "a map" which would enable them to relate past events in their own and other countries

to each other chronologically, and which would include "the most important features of the historical landscape of his own country and of the world".

● The subjects pupils learn about should be coherently related to each other; "information overload" must be avoided.

● Pupils should be made aware of "the dangers of anachronism" and study material which "encourages the growth of empathy - a sympathetic understanding of the past". Without this pupils can come to see past actions and ideas as "conflict, malice, or

meaningless", and assume that "we now know better".

● Pupils must study a balance of political, economic, social and cultural history.

Sir Keith, who was addressing a University of California conference on "History in the public schools", told his audience that although the British Government was trying to reach agreement on the broad content and objectives of the school curriculum, it had no intention of intervening with local decisions about the syllabus content of individual subjects.

Why black students are voting with their feet

SOUTH AFRICA

Jean Hey reports on a new wave of school boycotts over electoral reform

South African schools and universities have been in turmoil over the past two weeks, with well over 500,000 black and coloured students boycotting classes.

Students of all races have joined the protests against the "new deal" elections held on August 22 and 28 to establish a parliament for South Africa's Indian and coloured population.

The elections have been condemned as racist and undemocratic because they exclude blacks from the new parliamentary system and will ensure whites hold the majority of seats.

Thousands of students from the coloured University of the Western Cape stormed the Senate building earlier this month. They ripped out a bronze plaque laid by Mr B J Vorster, a former Prime Minister, and attempted to smash it on the pavement.

And as they marched back to the



campus they were met by policemen armed with submachine guns and sjamboks (leather whips).

At many other coloured tertiary institutions the boycotts have, however, been peaceful. In an attempt to make their studies more socially relevant, students have replaced normal studies with drama sessions, poetry

readings and quizzes - most with a political slant.

The number of black pupils boycotting classes has now risen from about 6,000 in May to at least 20,000 - most of whom are in the Transvaal.

On several occasions in the past month police have used tear gas to disperse rioting black children. Pupils

have also attacked teachers and set fire to schools. One pupil caught in the cross-fire later died of a bullet wound.

In an effort to quell the troubles, the Government suspended classes indefinitely at about 20 black schools during August alone. Many will remain closed for the rest of the year.

This latest surge of boycotts and the subsequent closure of schools has grave implications for black education in South Africa. Black schools are already drastically over-crowded and educationists and politicians fear that the upheaval will send the failure rate among black pupils soaring.

Only half of last year's black Matriculation (between A and O levels) candidates passed. This year, the number is expected to drop still further.

Even government officials recognize 1984 as one of the worst years for black education. "If we do not have an outflow at the top of the schools this year there will be a serious accommodation problem and pupils will suffer. These people have had their chance now and they may not be allowed back," Mr Job Scheeman, the chief public relations officer for the Department of Education and Training, told *The Times*.

A number of individual groups have sparked off this year's school boycotts. They include: [] rejection of an age limit for pupils [] rejection of corporal punishment [] the demand for a students' representative council to replace the elected prefect system.

But both government officials and their critics agree that these demands are a front for deeper issues. The present age limit of 20 affects 10 per cent of the 1.7 million black pupils according to the Department of Education and Training. As for the replacement of the prefect system, the Government is adamant it will not bow to that demand.

"The students' representative councils would be out and out political organizations that would try to control the schools. We believe SRCs would demand their own offices, typewriters, outside telephone lines, and insist on direct say in the hiring and firing of teachers," said Mr Job Scheeman.

The DET maintains the boycotts are instigated by "outsiders" and that many students have been intimidated into not attending classes.

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Getting to the heart of Africa

Elizabeth Gunner on killing myths of the 'dark continent'

Pupils in Britain should study major themes about Africa, including apartheid and "desertification" in order to counteract "the myths and stereotypes" about Africa that abound in Western schools.

Delegates to a recent Council of Europe conference, which met for five days in Finland recently to examine how to approach teaching about Africa, passed a recommendation urging European countries to "redress the imbalance in many current approaches to Africa".

The participants were worried that pupils were receiving only stereotyped ideas about "the dark continent" -

images of drought and famine, primitive tribes, and poor countries living off foreign aid.

They suggested a review of the curriculum and examinations about Africa, improved teacher education, and upgraded textbooks and other resources.

All parts of the education system, including universities, local authorities, teacher unions, subject organizations, and publishers must be involved in the change, the recommendation urges.

"We suggest also that a core of topics about Africa should be taught

for example, apartheid, desertification and the problems of agriculture, industrialization, the experience of peasants and workers and social and cultural change, and finally, Africa in the international system."

Participants were concerned that all teaching about Africa is infused with

prejudice, and that negative ideas about Africans exist not only in racist attitudes common in Europe, but in textbooks in current use.

A study by Dr Elfriede Hillers, of the George Eckert Institute for International Textbooks, of geography textbooks in use in five European countries, showed a number of factual errors and a general Euro-centric approach to Africa.

However Professor Terrence Ranger of Manchester University, in a paper on curriculum changes in Zimbabwe since independence, warned the conference that positive bias is as dangerous as negative bias.

Stepping up supply

UNITED STATES

Peter David on renewed fears of teacher shortage

The United States will face an educational disaster of epic proportions unless it makes a desperate effort to avert a massive shortage of qualified teachers, according to two new reports published last week.

One of the studies, by the Rand Corporation, says building an adequate teaching force might be impossible unless pay scales for teachers are virtually doubled to put them in the \$20,000-\$50,000 (£15,400-£38,000) range.

Rand bases its gloomy conclusions on a conference of several trends in the teaching force, including a exodus of younger teachers to other professions and growing unhappiness on the part of teachers who hold degrees as well as teaching certificates. These teachers, the report adds, are particularly unhappy with their lower pay and status and their lack of classroom autonomy.

If these trends continue unchecked, the report adds, teaching will become a refuge for the least able, as bright young graduates flock to more lucrative careers and experienced teachers retire.

A similar warning is contained in a separate study released last week by the American Federation of Teachers, the country's second biggest teaching union. It predicts that over the next 10 years the demand for teachers will so outstrip supply that a crisis can be averted only by an "immediate and radical" improvement in pay and status.

The AFT survey says that between 1973 and 1977 there was a buyers market. But by 1983 this had changed and on present trends, the federation warns, the supply of teachers as a percentage of demand will slump to 65 per cent by 1992.

In California alone, the report says, more than 150,000 new teachers will be needed by 1992, and in some cities shortages are already making themselves felt. Los Angeles, for example, faces a shortage of 1,400 qualified teachers next term and New York has recently been forced to modify its normal certification requirements to bring its teaching force up to strength.

Both new reports say shortages are most acute in maths and science. According to the AFT figures, the number of new maths teachers fell by 80 per cent between 1971 and 1980 and the number of new science teachers by 68 per cent. By 1995, the union estimates, some 300,000 new maths and science teachers will be needed -

more than are currently employed in the schools.

Mr Albert Shanker, AFT president, claims the shortages have already hit recruitment standards. He said: "Many school districts are so hard-pressed to find qualified maths and science teachers that they will settle for anyone who has a temperature of approximately 98.6 degrees."

While I understand their plight I fail to see how hiring unqualified individuals will guarantee that our students are proficient in maths and science. Becoming a maths and science teacher must be made as attractive as entering industry to turn this disgraceful situation around."

Maths and science are not the only shortage areas, however. A recent survey indicated severe shortages in data processing, bilingual education, special education and vocational education. And increasing primary roles in many parts of the country are creating a shortage of kindergarten and primary school teachers.

Like the Rand Corporation, the AFT sees higher salaries as a key element in attracting more people into teaching, but warns that better pay alone is not the answer. According to Mr Shanker, it is just as important to give teachers bigger professional responsibilities and give them more control over the curriculum and the running of the schools.

'Same again' for the Republicans

The Republican National Convention in Dallas last week adopted a staunchly conservative platform for education in November's presidential election, reinforcing many of the controversial measures espoused by the Reagan Administration over the past four years and making no concessions to moderate opinion within the Republican Party, writes Peter David.

Key elements of the platform include support for voluntary school prayer, and tuition tax credits for parents who send their children to private schools. It also opposes compulsory bussing, questions the value of sex education, calls for a return to basics and suggests that Federal aid for disadvantaged children should be converted into a voucher system.

Although the platform stresses that education is primarily a local rather than a Federal responsibility, the party is keen to ensure that President Reagan receives credit for having initiated a year of far-reaching reforms within the education system.

It says: "Ronald Reagan's significant and innovative leadership has encouraged and sustained the reform movement. He catapulted education to the forefront of the national agenda and will

be remembered as a president who improved education."

Recognizing the increased importance attached to education by the general public, the party announced to have dropped its proposal to abolish the Federal Department of Education created by President Carter. It describes as "a disastrous experiment" the attempt by the Carter Administration to move towards more centralization for American schools.

On sex education, the Republicans say that good intentions do not always produce good results. "We therefore urge our schools to evaluate their sex education programmes to determine their impact on escalating teenage pregnancy rates."

The platform also applauds the Administration for promising to reduce the ability of pupils to sue legal redress for disciplinary action by teachers or school administrators.

In Washington, meanwhile, the presidential nominee Geraldine Ferraro, a former AFT member, promised the federation's annual meeting that a Democratic administration would make education a top priority, increase pay for teachers and emphasize the importance of maths, science and languages.

Why conversion is taking a little longer

CHINA

Peter Mauger on the campaign for a more vocational curriculum

China is aiming to convert up to half of senior secondary schools for 15 to 18-year-olds into vocational schools.

Traditionally, the secondary school curriculum was entirely academic, but the Cultural Revolution changed all that, emphasizing the importance of combining education with productive labour, learning from workers and peasants, and open-door schooling.

After the fall of the Gang of Four in 1976, the schools reverted to a standard curriculum - politics, Chinese, maths, physics, chemistry, biology, history, geography, physical culture, art, and music. Courses were geared to the university entrance examinations, but there were higher education places for only about 1 per cent of the age group.

The system was producing failures who had no skills or aptitude for their future jobs. Hence the present campaign.

Key schools, a small proportion of the total, with a selective entry and better teaching equipment, are being asked to devote 10 per cent of their curriculum to vocational subjects. On a recent visit I found the most popular courses in these schools to be "applied electricity" - electrical circuits, meters, cookers, transistors, and film series by Longman Resources, 33-35 Turner Row, York YO1 1JP, from whom it is available, price £1.95.

Residential Training for Disabled People A 12-page guide produced by the Manpower Services Commission dealing with the facilities offered at four MSC-backed residential centres in Durham, Mansfield, Exeter and Leamington. The booklet, which is free, is available from Job Centres.

Royal Society of Chemistry A publication service for secondary school chemistry departments will be launched in January. For £30 p.p. subscribing schools will receive a bi-monthly package of four international chemistry education, careers booklets, information bulletins and posters will be mailed at regular intervals. A trial pack costing £2 is available from the Schools Unit Officer, The Royal Society of Chemistry, 30 Russell Square, London WC1.

The headmaster of the Huang Xuegang sewing and garment-making school in Beijing said government departments were clamouring for his graduates. And the Tianjin Television Vocational School had said his students were "well-behaved and competent; en-

terprises phone us up and ask for our graduates".

However, the progress of the conversion is patchy. The industrial province of Liaoning has taken the lead and 40 per cent of their senior school students are said to be in vocational schools. But in the southern province of Guangdong, I was told that only 108 schools had been converted, including 92 to agricultural schools, out of a total of 1,220.

There is still a feeling among parents that vocational schools are inferior. Ordinary school subjects are supposed to take up to at least 60 per cent of the curriculum, but students, though theoretically allowed to sit the university entrance examinations, are obviously at a severe disadvantage, especially as their vocational courses are not taken into account (consideration is being given to the question of their inclusion).

Every rural county is supposed to have one agricultural school, studying scientific crop planting, animal husbandry, forestry and fishery. Here again progress in conversion was slow and depended on the support of the county education bureau and the local peasantry; one county official in Hainan Island told me: "We have asked two regular schools to introduce vocational courses, but so far they haven't."

The vocational schools I was able to visit in cities were very well run. Skilled staff had been recruited, some from considerable distances. Capital expenditure was on a scale so generous that it was difficult to see it being applied to 40-50 per cent of senior middle schools - though some were making a healthy profit from the sale of their products.

The most impressive place I visited was the Technical Teachers' College in Tianjin. Started in 1980, it trains teachers in electrical engineering, machine building and industrial electrical automation. A machine tool factory attached to the college enables students to do practical work. A technical school is also attached to the college with the two aims of training technicians and providing a place for the students to do their teaching practice.

Three such colleges have recently been established by the Ministry of Labour. They are the prototypes of others to be set up in the main industrial centres.

Can graduate quantity and quality be reconciled?

ITALY

Since 1968, when admission to Italy's universities was liberalized, any upper-secondary school diploma gives access to any university faculty.

As a result, the country's university student population has doubled over the past 15 years, soaring from 850,000 to the present 1,100,000. The structure, however, has remained virtually unchanged and a crucial question today is whether the universities can handle the hordes and still produce graduates capable of competing in the national and international work markets.

Milan's Bocconi University, whose faculty of economics is one of Italy's most prestigious, has finally said no, and applied programmed admission for the first time this year. Only a chosen few will be selected on the basis of their leaving marks and a general admission exam.

Other universities have followed suit, especially faculties of medicine which are producing more doctors than the country can absorb. The ratio in Italy is one doctor per 265 head of population, a far cry from the figure indicated by the World Health Organization of 1:600. France, Germany and Spain all have ratios of about 1:400 and Great Britain, whose model Italy ostensibly imitated when it set up its national health programme, 1:610. Italy now has 158,000 registered medical students, compared to 60,000 in the United States.

Theoretically, the *numerus clausus* principle is a good thing, say some, because it meets the needs of the country's economy and upgrades the level of higher education. But critics say it favours students who were encouraged to take the scientific or classical *liceo* diploma, but punishes their less fortunate contemporaries whose choice of a technical school is usually not of their own making.

Others claim that programmed admission is a non-issue - first, because students with good grades who can demonstrate financial need are not denied scholarships; and secondly, because the glut of students is more apparent than real.

Of the large number registering many drop out or simply take their time because studying for a degree is a secondary activity, or even a hobby. For these, who account for about two-thirds of the student population, many experts would welcome the institution of correspondence courses along the lines of those offered in other European countries.

Rita di Giuseppe

The growing voice of parent power

FRANCE

A notice in white letters on a blue background may still be found outside many French schools. It prohibits entry of the school buildings to anyone who is not a member of the teaching profession. There are historical reasons for this stand-offish attitude towards outsiders, primarily parents. But recently, the attitude has been changing.

Since 1968, parents have gradually been allowed onto a number of school committees and have been able to make their voice heard within each school. Even before this, however, there were a host of local parent associations, which came into existence today as whether the universities can handle the hordes and still produce graduates capable of competing in the national and international work markets.

What has given these parents' associations a growing political voice is the freedom local school-based groups have to join highly organized national federations. At present, three such federations dominate the scene.

The *Fédération des conseils de parents d'élèves* (FCPE) has been over recent years the largest and most powerful. In the early 1970s, it was able to boast well over a million members and even today has some 900,000. On the question of the private schools, it takes an overtly aggressive position. Ever since the Debré Law of 1959 allocated massive state subsidies to the private sector, it has, along with left-wing parties and trade unions (including state school teachers' unions), looked to an abolition of the financial support of private schools and to their integration into the state system.

Ranged against the FCPE on the crucial private school issue is the almost equally powerful Catholic parents' organization, the *Union nationale*

des associations de parents d'élèves de l'enseignement libre (UNAPEL). Highly suspicious of the possible actions of a socialist government, UNAPEL recently showed its strength by organizing a series of massive public rallies against the now abandoned schools' Bill.

Taking a more restrained view of the conflict is the third largest group, the *Fédération des parents d'élèves de l'enseignement public* (FPEP) with more than 400,000 members. As its name suggests, it, too, is a supporter of the state school system, but believes this support should concentrate on improving the quality of educational provision within state schools and not dissipate its energy in attacking the private sector.

In spite of deep political differences, they all perform many useful day-to-day functions. They give advice and support to parents on school committees and, through their journals, keep all parents informed of new legislation concerning education. They encourage parental involvement on many aspects of school life including careers, school buses and school outings. They have negotiated insurance schemes which parents can take out to insure their children against accidents and illness.

Above all, they closely monitor educational trends and developments and give widespread publicity to any apparent deterioration in the educational service.

It is interesting to reflect whether those politicians in the United Kingdom who call for a larger parental say in education would welcome the emergence of large French-style federations.

Michael Heafford

NOTICEBOARD

PEOPLE...

SCHOOL APPOINTMENTS
Mr David Paterson, former deputy head of Farlington School, Hants to be head of

Charmdean School for Girls, Buckingham.

Mr Edmund Lowe, deputy head of Christ the King Roman Catholic Primary School, Tooting Park, to be head of St Monica's Roman Catholic Primary School, Hoxton.

Mrs Elizabeth Peel, deputy head of Belmont Primary School, Chiswick, to be head of Oratory Roman Catholic Primary School, South Kensington.

Sister Mary Leah to be head of St Augustine's Roman Catholic primary school in Barchingham. She was formerly deputy head.

COLLEGE APPOINTMENTS
Mr Ian Horrobb, deputy warden of the Inner London Education Authority Music Centre, to be vice-director of the Royal College of Music; Mr Jasper Thorogood, assistant director of studies at the College, to be registrar; Mr Nicholas King, director of studies at King Alfred's College, Winchester, to be Vice Principal of St Martin's College, Lancaster.

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NEWS

Manchester. The theme is economics in general education: Improving economic literacy. Delegates from ten member countries of the EEC are expected to attend. Details from the Conference Organizer, Department of Education, University of Manchester, Manchester M13 9PL.

September 22
Getting into University: a seminar for A level students, their parents, teachers and careers advisers on choosing a course and college, admissions procedures and application strategies. The seminar from 10 am-1 pm on 22 pm-5 pm will be held at the Schools Council Programme, 33-35 Turner Row, York YO1 1JP, from whom it is available. Admission £3, reduction for groups. Details from Jane O'Reilly, Careers Consultants Ltd, 12/14 Hill Rise, Richmond, Surrey.

October 2
A regional training day organized jointly by the Children's Legal Centre and The Spastics Society for parents, professionals, anyone concerned with the Working Children Act, 1981 to be held at the Liverpool Information, Issues in Special Education, Integration, strategies for representation, and the new role for parents and professionals as partners. Details from the Centre for Studies on Integration in

CONFERENCES...
September 2-8
Fifth European Conference on Economics Education at Holly Ridge College.

Education, The Spastics Society, 16 Filzroy Square, London W1P 5HQ.

EVENTS...
September 13
The Inner City Education Lecture will be given by Professor Carol Dweck on Motivation to Learn and Views of the Self at 7 pm at the North Westminster Community School. Tickets (free) from The Lecture Secretary, Room 5, North Westminster Community School, North Wharf Road, London W2.

September 22
Computers in Education: an exhibition organized by Somerset MAPE at Clark's Factory in Street. Free entry to teachers from 10 am to 4 pm. Open to the public (50p entrance) from 12 noon to 4 pm. No unaccompanied children will be admitted.

September 27-28
An exhibition of course work produced by students undertaking the RSA in-service training scheme for the teaching of community languages in supplementary and mainstream schools. Sixty-two candidates have attended courses offering Bengali, Cantonese, Greek, Hindi, Mandarin, Punjabi and Urdu. The exhibition is in the Radnor Room, RSA, John Adam Street, London WC2, from 10 am to 5 pm.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Skills for adult working life: a guide to resources - a handbook for secondary teachers concerned with materials which can help to promote skills acquisition including life and social skills, communications, numeracy, vocational preparation, study skills and materials for skills development. The Schools Council Programme, 33-35 Turner Row, York YO1 1JP, from whom it is available, price £1.95.

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Arrogance to say heads cannot learn from industry

Sir - Bert Lodge's review of the Bedford Way Paper, *Education plc* (TES, August 17), highlights the views of only two of its contributors, Ms Pat White, and Mr Michael Fielding and dramatizes a very limited and naïve view of school management, and management training. It is nonsense to imply that the present Department of Education training initiative is based on a simplistic transfer of industrial management experience to schools. Equally, educators should not be blind to what they can learn from the experience of managing both other public service organizations, and industrial and commercial organizations.

While I do not sympathize with the style of management implied in David Trethowan's articles, it would be a pity if the debate about school management training deteriorated into a personal attack on Mr Trethowan, particularly by authors with very limited practical experience of school management or management training.

Since *Education plc* is published under the name of the Institute of Education it is necessary to point out that the views reported by Bert Lodge are not those of the staff responsible for school management training courses at the Institute.

Utopian ideas

Sir - The London Institute of Education authors who call for school workplace democracy sound ferociously Utopian (or Marxist/Livingstonist). They were reported (TES, August 17) as attacking one man who advocated an industrial approach to running a school: Mr David Trethowan. Their unanimous, megaton argument probably persuaded impartial readers that an ideal school management system will lie somewhere in between their extreme advocacy of replacing "the authority of the head" with equal access to "all forms of power" and the introduction of modern industrial methods based on excellent outside practice.

In any event, if the authors sus-

For the record, the management training courses directed by Dr Pamela Young and myself at the Institute are attempting to find the right synthesis of professional and management training, drawing from experience both within and outside the education service. Course members are given the opportunity to meet with the managers of industrial and other organizations as part of their course. An independent course evaluation indicates that teachers find contact with managers from outside the education service very valuable.

Unfortunately most of the contributors to *Education plc* have not taken the opportunity to participate in the management training components of the Institute of Education courses. Of the contributors named by Bert Lodge, Mr Michael Fielding has had no connexion with the management training courses at the Institute of Education. Mrs White has contributed a few philosophy seminars which the students have found valuable, but she has taken no part in exploring at first hand the nature of industrial management and management training, and assessing its relevance to education.

Rather than "a powerful challenge to fashionable belief" as suggested by

pendent their theoretical Utopian ideas and examined the mainstream of modern management practice with neutrality, they would be shocked to find participation is rather pass, with its vogue period being the 1960s and 1970s.

Good contemporary business and school management practices, defined as those producing mainly happy and efficient staff, employ autocracy and democracy, with an imposed leadership/structured style, and a participative/considerative style, both sensitively contingent on particular management and work situations.

Let us hope that not too many of our teacher trainers propagate such unworkable-in-practice views. Do such theoreticians think education is so uniquely different from every other sphere of workplace that they can

Bert Lodge, *Education plc* should probably be regarded as yet more evidence of why the industrial management trainers are having such a field day in education at present. Simple stereotyped views of headship on the one hand, and the assumed immorality of industrial management on the other, prevent some teachers and trainers coming to grips with the very real problems of managing complex school organizations.

There is little in the management training packages offered by management consultants and training organizations such as Education for Industrial Society which is unknown to the world of educational administration but educators should not be so arrogant as to suggest that they can learn nothing from a comparative study of other management and training practice. It will be said if publications such as *Education plc* reinforce prejudice, and inhibit teachers from taking advantage of the opportunity to learn from experience outside their own sector.

Dr JOHN WELTON
Lecturer in Educational Administration
University of London
Institute of Education

ignore such insights as Peter Brannen's recent book, *Authority and Participation in Industry* (Batsford, 1983) gives on Marxism, quality circles, and autonomous work groups?

Should anyone practising rather than preaching about school management - that is, of departments or above in schools - like to assist an inquiry I am planning at Sheffield University into good management factors common to schools and industry/business, I would truly welcome their help. Together we may discover some aspects of management creating happiness and efficiency in schools that mere dogmatists can never bring about.

JOHN CONDER
Pear Tree Farm
Knottley Road
Pontefract
W Yorks

Family break-up

Sir - I welcome the research of the Child Care and Development Group, Cambridge, "Schools Caught in the Middle: Educating the Children of Divorce" (TES, August 17), which clearly emphasizes the valuable role primary school teachers can play in supporting their pupils through the stresses of family break-up.

Our own research, *Children and Family Break-Up in Anglo-Jewry*, due to be published in September, has similar findings but has more emphasis on the needs of secondary school children and staff.

This area would also benefit greatly by the regular updating of information on children's home circumstances and this information being available to all appropriate teachers. However, many adolescent children need much more help than a "sympathetic ear" and it should be recognized that not all teachers have the time or training to offer this support. In fact, we found that many teachers experienced difficulties in discussing this area with parents.

The divorce rate is high and is likely to remain so for some years. The result is that approximately one in five children will experience family break-up before they are 16 years old. It would therefore be valuable if secondary schools were encouraged to meet this need by developing their pastoral roles to include adequate counselling services. This should be seen as an integral part of education and the time, training, and support needs of those staffing such services, offered proper recognition.

MARLENE COHEN
West Central Counselling and Community Research
31 Gower Street
Bloomsbury
London WC1



Enthusiasts on the trail... but should such pursuits be compulsory for YTS groups?

Forced marches

Sir - I would like to endorse the comments of Rob Collier (TES, August 17) who advises the "reluctant mountaineers" to "stay at home".

Youth Training Schemes can and do benefit from the experiences gained from outdoor education: such benefits, however, can be acquired only if they attend courses voluntarily. Scheme organizers should not make the attendance compulsory or subject to the non-payment of wages.

A recent, voluntarily-attended course at a local authority outdoor pursuits centre for a group of unemployed young people (the majority of

whom also had criminal records) passed without incident and was highly successful. Individuals within YTS groups attending the same centre under compulsion (paid to be there) are in some instances having to be sent home following incidents of vandalism to property.

"Action, thrills and adventure" are perhaps best retained within an environment to which it is accustomed. To spread compulsorily such initial behaviour to the countryside benefits none, least of all the centre warden upon whom such behaviour reflects.

JOHN BAXTER
Youth Officer
Humbleside County Council

Women and work

Sir - J R Tron (Letters, TES, August 3) touches on reasons why relatively few women apply for senior positions in schools. There is, however, one over-riding cause from which all these reasons stem. It is that, for as long as society differentiates adult roles and gives to women the task of caring for the young and the elderly, it cannot also expect them to be able to fulfil the male career role. Men's and women's patterns of work experience differ, yet they will be compared on identical criteria when they search for senior posts. In career terms, women would usually be found to lack management experience and, maybe, also substantial advanced mid-career study. Experience which women do have, of

understanding and nurturing human relationships, despite its application to teaching and management, seems to be undervalued.

Perhaps a more pertinent line of inquiry would be to discover whether schools actually want women as part of their senior management teams. The Affirmation would be seen to be authenticated if a commitment was made towards revaluing women's contribution and making available to service funds which might enable women to cope better with the work constraints imposed upon them by society's expectations.

M M EVANS
5 Appletree Close
Godalming
Surrey

Hocus-pocus

Sir - I have just returned from holiday and read with interest W T McCool's Lingo piece (TES, July 27) in which he rejected some of the etymologies included in my Lingo piece (TES, July 6). Although they had been culled from supposedly reputable sources, I also had misgivings about some of the examples and for that reason had added a brief qualification of "possibly" or "perhaps", hoping that some correspondence might result.

In particular, *hoc est corpus* is discussed in a number of places as a possible source of "hocus-pocus", on the basis of Tilloison's conjecture in the eighteenth century that it was a distortion of a few words in the Latin Mass. This derivation is apparently accepted as likely by a number of people, including Partridge (*Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English*) who also quotes a Scandinavian phrase *hokuspokusfillokus*.

On the other hand, *hax par max Deus admax*, suggested by the *Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology* does not seem close enough in either form or sound to be very convincing. Perhaps, as some have suggested, the phrase was nothing more than a kind of mock Latin coined by entertainers.

I was never happy about the derivation of "nitwit" offered. Now we know, thanks to Loek Elfferich (TES, August 17) that it was nonsense. The source was C Berlioz, *Native Tongues*. Readers beware!

A BARNES
16 Manor Close
Bognor Regis
W Sussex

use the expression when presenting something, but also when asking something. Many a Dutchman can be observed saying "please" when handing something to someone in Great Britain instead of "here you are". You now know why. This concludes the Second Lesson.

LOEK ELFFERICH
Information Officer Education
Town Hall
Rotterdam

Letters for publication should be kept as brief as possible and typed on one side of the paper only. The Editor reserves the right to cut or amend them.

English to take centre of syllabus

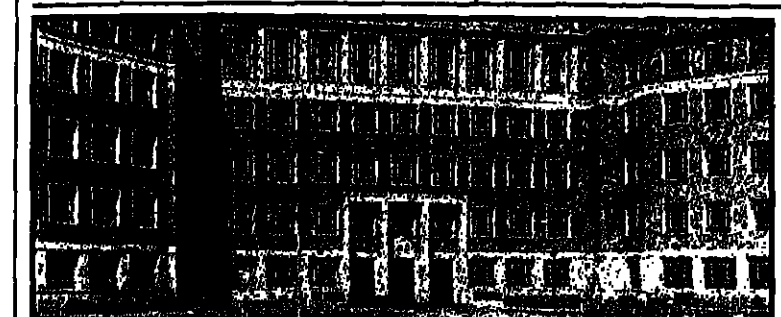
Sir - It may cheer the heart of your dejected A level English literature examiner (TES, August 17) to learn that moves are afoot to grant his desire for English to be "put back firmly at the centre of the A level syllabus".

Last year, the Joint Matriculation Board introduced an experimental course in A level English language, the aims of which are "to combine learning about the nature and function of language in human thought and communication with learning how to use English more effectively".

All we need now is to make such a

post O level qualification in English a requirement for entrance to higher education for all students (along the lines of the Scottish Certificate's Higher English) and we should be well on our way to producing students who are capable of writing "unaided a decent letter of application for a job" - and much else!

BRENDA BLAKELEY
First year A level tutor
Derby College of Further Education
Wilmorton
Derby



Croydon College... teachers harassed.

Production line

Sir - The whole purpose of this month of August for teachers is surely to provide them with sufficient rest and recuperation for tackling the rigours of the new academic year. But so many are worried over the future of their work and their schools and colleges that it is difficult for them to relax and enjoy a well-earned break.

Particularly, and seemingly quite unnecessarily, harassed are the teachers of Croydon College and, in a way, their plight typifies the problem of our times.

Last year, the Croydon local authority dismissed all its FE teachers in order to try and force them into accepting new contracts in the interests of higher "productivity". And the same industrial methods have been used this year by Croydon College governors to impose a new management structure which is more fitting for a manufacturing company than an educational establishment.

The facilities within the college which actually make the educational provision, are no longer responsible in management terms to the principal, but to the vice-principal appointment, which has become one of composite responsibility, embracing not only academic "production" but also resources. Consequently, the office of principal is now such that staff can be forgiven for not knowing what its function is, although presumably it is to serve the Board of Governors, it is

with external bodies and provide a titular head of the "enterprise". And the most important management responsibility of all - that of actually relating to staff of all kinds and all the students, both part and full-time - is embraced by one senior manager, an assistant principal, acting as college personnel officer.

Does anyone know of anything like this in the whole of further education? Are FE colleges in the future to be divided into the managers and the managed?

It is not at all helpful for management to rule faculty boards "out of order" when they are desperately concerned about management methods which massively affect their educational programmes. Teachers are managers too, but how many principals see themselves as teachers, or even educationalists of some kind or another?

And how far have the students been consulted or even considered? After all, the service is for them.

We are most alarmed by this dangerous and unprofessional innovation in further education. But perhaps we would be wise to move over to the business of manufacture and organize the production of televisions and vending machines instead of providing an educational service. Then, perhaps, foreign products would take less than their monstrous share of our home market!

J A S WATERS
744A High Road
London N17

Failure at four

Sir - John Rowe's letter on the admission of all children to school at the beginning of the school year in which they become five is well meaning but unfortunately this would be a retrograde step in the concept of education for the preschool years.

If the under-fives (only just four) are to have the staffing ratios, accommodation, equipment and a programme appropriate to their stage of development, then they should have nursery classes or nursery schools with nursery trained teachers and fully qualified nursery assistants. Why should they become the youngest in a primary school before they are the oldest in a nursery class? The Bristol research (Gordon Wales) has shown that children fail the moment they start school.

The period up to five years is the time when most growth takes place. All development theory, all psychology theory, all psycho-analytic theory deals with the first five years as a particular phase. The culmination of that phase is the entire year from four years to five years.

This is the year when socially the child has his first experience of taking the leadership role, of being able to direct others; because the child can now verbalize ideas and give explanations; this is the time when the skills of

dressing and undressing have been learnt and also the skills of setting a table.

The four-year-olds love to teach the three-year-olds all this and in addition they are beginning to understand that they were once three years old "a very long time ago".

It is during this year that the nursery child identifies with the adult, challenging the adult world and finding in the nursery class that she is "grown up".

In an under-fives class, the child misses all this. The child is the youngest in the school, the least capable, the smallest, the "baby" before having the chance to become the oldest and most capable, which is important because success breeds confidence and confidence breeds success.

All children (and the Bristol researchers stress "all") who remain at home are competent in language, by the age of five. None of them have failed yet, even though there is a three-year range of competence at this stage. Schooling does not help because by the end of the primary years the gap has widened to seven years.

One cannot claim laurels for nursery education, no research has proved it to work miracles, but it does have something unique to offer education and the young child, something that is complementary to the home (but definitely not a substitute for a bad home which is

Idea abandoned

Sir - How refreshing to see the article "Marking Time". At the same time, how sad to see that the making of such fundamental points had to come from the oral and written use of one's primary language.

In this country, we seem to have thrown away the idea that our language has a structure and a discipline and, therefore, a beauty, a flexibility and subtlety. The study of the mechanics of our language appears to have been abandoned on the (surely spurious) grounds, that such discipline inhibited creativity and flow. The result has been sort of debility in language skills.

We all get very irritated when having to listen to a speaker with poor presentation skills: the irritation is no less strong when confronted with the imprecision and confusion of the texts of those with poor written communication skills.

No free lunch

Sir - The report on the disarray of the restructuring talks (TES, August 10) makes sad reading.

After 35 years as a schoolmaster and clinging to the belief that I am a member of a caring profession, I do not understand how any teacher can claim that "lunch-time supervision should be strictly voluntary" with no compensation possible.

What is supposed to happen to the pupils at this time? To talk about more mid-day supervisors is manifestly idiotic since they are not, and cannot, be trained to cope with the many problems that are liable to arise.

Do doctors and nurses abandon their patients for over an hour in the middle of every day?

In the vast majority of secondary schools, half an hour per teacher per week would provide ample cover.

Is this really too much to ask?
PETER HEYWOOD
2 Dalemore Gardens
Aspley Park Drive
Nottingham

Rural morality

Sir - I was grateful for your notice of Derrick Rugg's *Across Cobblestones* as you and Tom Corfe might easily have thought his "simple tales" too slight for mention by your authoritative medium. My feeling is that the book provides a vivid picture of a particular rural way of life.

I am writing, however, not because you are likely to want to know this, but to take up a point about the odd, though fashionable, concept of "middle-class morality", which Mr Corfe mentions in his review. My conviction has not yet been shaken that "middle-class morality" was shared by most classes and still is to a great extent.

I believe that the concept of "middle-class morality" is false and that "rural" as opposed to "urban", morality would be more accurate.

CAROLINE WHITE
Tabb House Publishers
11 Church Street
Padstow, Cornwall

a different consideration altogether). The pedagogy in nursery education enables the children to negotiate their own goals at their own pace with adults committed to the principle of "learning through play". Never again will the child have a chance to play in this way because at five years she is already beginning to look for rules and regulations, already at six years socio-dramatic play has gone, never to return except in therapy techniques or drama classes.

Yes, our children deserve the best possible educational start we can give them, but the under-fives class is "education on the cheap" and it leads to nursery education ending at four years.

Unless the child has quality education, the child is perhaps better off at home "as it ever goes" (on average, the parent addresses the child directly three times a minute. In school the ratio is once every twelve minutes).

Nursery education without the four-year-olds is not quality education and under-fives classes without trained nursery teachers, low adult/child ratios and the full nursery age range is also not quality education.

VALERIE KOTZEN
Head Teacher
Dorothy Gardner Nursery School
293 Shirland Road
London W9

Can we please bring back some study of the basic skills and knowledge of what, even in the age of information technology, remains an important human attribute - fluency in the oral and written use of one's primary language.

PETER WHITFIELD
Training manager of an East Midlands electronics company

Mark of confusion

Sir - I read with great interest the thoughts of the teacher who has spent three weeks ploughing through sundry English literature A level scripts.

Only yesterday I learned the result of my own English examination, and as was true with all my friends - and was so in our O level year - the results in this particular subject have been confoundingly poor.

It is not that my friends or teachers

are in the least incompetent. I fancy, but it is rather that there is considerable confusion as to what the examiners want which prompts such consistently poor results. The teacher responsible for the article mentions that very little school history is apparent in the essays he marks, but is this surprising when one considers the paltry three-hour time limit for three to five essays? Our teachers do encourage us to research the social climates, lives and works of authors and their times, but both the fear of committing the dreaded "irrelevance" crime and the difficulties of hopping between social history and text tend to make background research fade.

I would love to feel at liberty to pepper an essay concerned with Webster's *Duchess of Malfi* with various historical asides, but while the teacher concerned would find such discussion worthy of good marks, the next man may dismiss it out of hand. When all is said and done, it is ludicrous to suggest that any examiner can dispassionately assess something as subjective and indefinable as a piece of appreciation.

ROBERT D SMITH (aged 18)
264 Turton Road
Bradshaw
Bolton

Social standing

Sir - The Burnham Teachers' Panel, in their report to the Arbitrators (TES, August 17) refer to the "marked deterioration over the past ten years in the financial and hence (my italics) social standing of teachers in society".

It is surprising that professional people, not concerned with the values of the market place, should link income with social standing. Do they regard pop stars as of higher social standing than opera singers?

Dare I suggest that the general public's view of teachers is more likely to be influenced by their industrial action than by the fact that the average teacher's salary was 137 per cent of the non-manual average in May 1974 and 110 per cent in April 1983. Parents in particular may give teachers a lower social standing when they see the education of thousands of children disrupted by strikes.

PAULA HARRIS
442 Baddow Road
Great Baddow
Chelmsford

Westwood pupil

Sir - I am writing to complain about the sixth paragraph of your report: "Euro setback in light for grammars" (TES, August 24). Lesley Ann Medland has not yet arrived at Westwood St Thomas School.

She has been attending a local middle school up until now and is not due to start at our school until next week. Because of the inaccurate reporting, doubt is indirectly cast on the reputation of this school and on my staff and their capabilities based on Mrs Medland's supposed experiences through Lesley as a pupil at our school.

JEAN JEFFERSON
Head designate
Westwood St Thomas School
Salisbury

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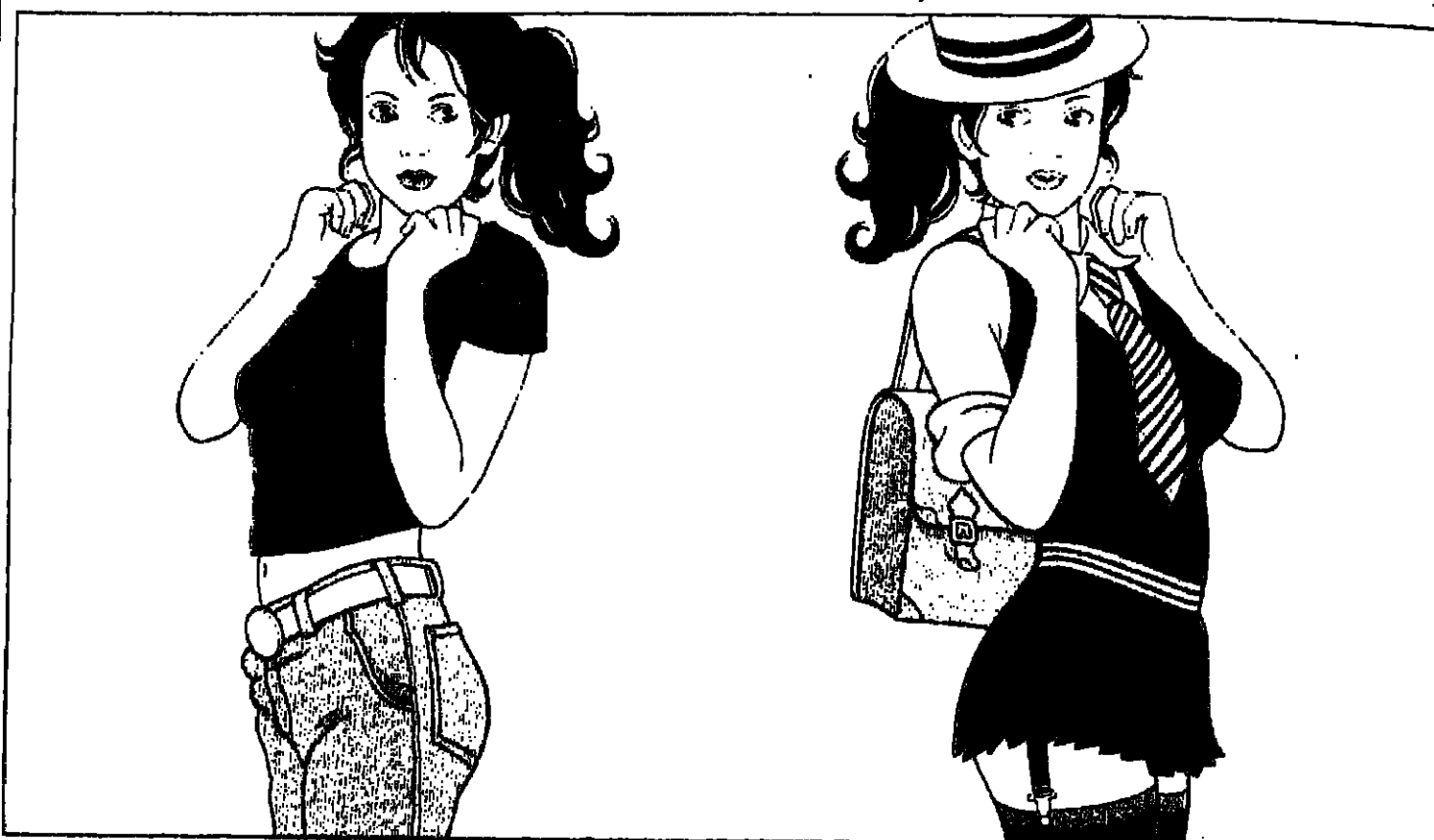
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FEATURES

Judging by appearances

The battle over dress is not worth fighting but schools cannot afford to lose it, says John Sturt



Uniform is intended to repress the child's sexuality

Most other countries manage without school uniform yet we cling to it as if it were our last hope in a sea of change and uncertainty. We have to invest a massive amount of time and energy just to sustain and perpetuate this chronic ulcer of resentment which grumbles away, souring the relationships between succeeding generations of children and their teachers. Ought we not at least to ask ourselves why it is that we not only go with it but actually tend to use it as the yardstick with which to judge the quality of our schools?

Our country believes that it draws much strength from its traditions. It certainly owes a number of weaknesses to the same source. In this uniform business we are largely aping famous schools of the past, while the famous schools of today – with some spectacular exceptions – have bowed out of this particular charade. There are still expensive and exclusive schools, and their imitators, who demand uniforms that can be bought only at Harrods; but the majority of these are girls' schools, and the psychology behind their faith in uniform is interesting to say the least.

One original reason for school uniform, strongly held years ago but never mentioned now, appealed to those running educational establishments for young ladies. It centred round the belief that imposed rules on clothing repressed child sexuality, and this comforting belief still hovers somewhere in the backs of the minds of many who would not acknowledge it openly. Of course the idea that a felt hat, a tie and a blazer will conceal the sex of the wearer, that gym-slips and black stockings will render the wearer unattractive are now laughable. Every prostitute worth her salt keeps all these items in her wardrobe for speciality work, and every schoolgirl who is interested knows how to make a gym-slip as provocative as a mini skirt.

Most teachers would probably express themselves in favour of retaining uniform. Certainly as a profession the status quo seems a life line and we do not always question our own beliefs as we should. The retentionist arguments centre round school spirit, pride in school, smartness, easy identification, the blurring of the obvious gap between rich and poor, and so on. There is some truth in all these arguments, but less so every year. One must also remember that in the days when the state of childhood was inviolate and accorded a protected status there were advantages in wearing what identified you as a child. But now the young are often marked out for exploitation, and the symbols of their youth protect them not at all.

The assumption is regularly made, and by those who should know better, that a school which manages to maintain a smart uniformity in its

pupils' dress is a good school. That may be true, of course, but not for that reason. The fact is that a highly uniformed school is almost always either a selective school, a school with a largely middle-class catchment area, or a school without many deprived homes and a determination to battle for uniform at all costs.

The fight for uniform is not just a matter of having a clear policy and taking a firm line. It is very expensive in time and energy and will certainly mean more non-teaching time for pastoral staff than would otherwise be the case. Secondly, there is the cost of the damage to the

relationship between the staff and the pupils. Most youngsters will accept that there is a school policy on uniform, and if the school is fairly relaxed on the subject they will stay fairly close to the requirements. Maybe they will risk a frill round the neck of a blouse, and as long as the blouse is the right colour the school will tend not to notice the frill. If they go to ridiculous lengths the school will react sharply and they will understand this and grudgingly accept it. But to maintain strict standards of uniform means nagging, and nagging constantly. The children will then try out tiny deviations to test the staff

who then not only have to nag, but nag over trivial matters and become in the children's eyes small-minded and petty.

One must also remember that with some pupils one never will win. If parents absolutely refuse, and some will, what is to be done? I doubt if any local authority in the country will actually back you up if it comes to a show down and you want to exclude a child for wearing the wrong coloured trousers. Even the expedient of sending them home to change is loaded with dangers, for the uniform problem is intricately interwoven with several others.

for trouble. In one scripture lesson for 15-year-old Boothe wench, all green jumpers and hair pins, I was the shaken witness of the shrieked replies offered to a distressed trainee who naively posed the question, "What do you think St Paul did in his spare time?"

In the fourth place, there is actually starting the job itself, and, once more, the May Day signals are in evidence. Out drop a few more weakened vessels. In my first job we were joined by a teacher from a school a hundred or so miles away, where, as far as I knew, a student acquaintance of mine had started his own career. I asked after him. My new colleague looked at me suspiciously, chary of one who confessed to friendship with such an oddball, for pitch defileth, where it toucheth. Apparently he never even turned up at all. Talk about the dog that didn't bark. He didn't even wag his tail. There was never a word, or a letter, or a phone call, or a spirit message through the ether. The chemistry master had even checked out UFO sightings in the Barnsley area for that date, just in case he had been beamed up, or perhaps down, to Mars to act as geophysics teacher at the H G Wells College of FE. This disappearing dominie, this Houdini of the common room, was never heard of again, although it is rumoured that, every September 4, the school put out a plate of rice pudding with a spot of raspberry jam in the centre in case he turns up, and, when he doesn't, they hang a wreath on the time-table.

Even if you are elevated to the peerage of college tuition as distinct from school teaching, troubles can persist. It's often the minutiae, the small print of the situation, that proves bothersome. One delightful old colleague of mine became the one-man advance party at a women's college which was planning to go coed. The decidedly distaff authorities never thought that a gentlemen's would be required; indeed, the extant tutors were so refined, it was hard to conceive of them needing a ladies! An urbane and courteous man, for a year he took a bus ride home every time he wanted a wee-wee.

An involvement some years ago with induction schemes for first year teachers proved very revealing. Generation gaps appear very quickly, and teachers are not very aware of the tag, O Tempora, O Mores. The older teacher, detailed

It is, surprising, and indeed shocking, that we remain so unsympathetic to the needs of entrants and recruits of all kinds in education, the more so because those in control have themselves had to negotiate the same swinging doors in the past. It is as if familiarity breeds not so much a contempt, as a complacency about such difficulties. Having become ourselves accustomed to this or that subculture within the educational system, we forget how confusing and hellish it was at first. There are about half a dozen critical thresholds.

The first is, of course, the child starting or changing school. I still believe we have little or no concept of the dark horrors that can be conjured up in the child's mind. The mother of an old friend of mine was head of a tiny infants school in the wilds of Catholic Lancashire, way back in the twenties. She related to us how she watched Tommy, a five-year-old, diminutive in all things save for his huge dogs. He stalked slowly and grimly down the school driveway on his first day. His moist-eyed and be-shawled granny wept at the gate, and, yard by yard, halted him for another tear-strewn farewell. "Tommy: Ta ta, Tommy," she cried, and Tommy would halt, turn and gruffly mutter, "Ta ta, granny." This happened several times, until, a stride or so from the waiting door, Tommy realized that all was lost and there was no escaping his scholastic destiny. "Tommy: Tommy: ta ta, Tommy," cried his sorrowing grandmother. Tommy turned stoically for the final time. "Aye, and ta ta to thee, granny," he said sternly, and I hope 'bloody school falls down on 'bloody flags.' Few other infants have quite caught the Miltonesque eloquence of Tommy's anti-authoritarianism, but many have known exactly what he felt.

Starting college to train to become a teacher has caused as many palpitations. The first lecture I attended at university was on medieval political institutions, but it turned out to be on elementary physiology, owing to the accident of two Bennetts teaching in the same lecture halls that morning. The fact that it was the most informative lecture I heard that term did not compensate for the embarrassment. Years later I referred jokingly to this occasion as I opened a series of lectures, adding, "so if anyone is here by mistake, no leave

now". Three red-faced students departed, whether accident victims, satirist or opportunists, I know not.

That was as nothing compared to some cases. I was amazed how many threw in the chalk and board duster within days of commencement of the course. I witnessed the ultimate example when, as warden of a hall of residence, I stood, wreath'd in beads and smiles, welcoming the new arrivals. Mine host was interrupted in his conversational greetings ("Had a good vac?"; "Do have a good term"; and other scintillating gambits) by the arrival of a car. A youth, wracked with a biliousness just this side of unconsciousness, was helped through the portals by his anxious parents and by willing students dancing attendance. He was absolutely bowled over by the very thought of it all. We half-carried him, feet dragging, to the sanatorium. He lay there supine for a couple of days without mending at all, and then the motor car returned and transported him back to the real world. His entire experience of higher education was in the sick-bay.

Then there was the first school practice, the initial brush with the enemy, and a steady flow went AWOL at that juncture. Just to sketch one illustration. I was seated one evening in my study, when the door burst open, a young lady burst in and collapsed, a crumpled heap, on my easy chair, without so much as a knock at the door, a by-your-leave or a kiss my iceberg. She drew deeply on and fished a cigarette, but not before lighting another, and putting heavily upon that immediate replacement. When she had pulled herself together to the point of resembling nothing more nerve-wrecked than a gibbering zombie, she recounted her tale. She had, that afternoon, been teaching art to a fourth form of boys in a Wigan secondary modern school, which, truth to tell, had not of late had many paintings accepted for exhibition by the Royal Academy.

Starters' orders

Eric Midwinter bemoans the complacency that greets the new boy or girl

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Boys will be boys, and their thoughts had turned to the sturdier discipline of physics and away from the more effete pursuit of portraying a scene from their favourite book in poster-colours. They were intrigued by the mechanics of propulsion and had embarked on an experiment which involved rolling the jam jars, more traditionally deployed for dipping in the paint-brushes, across the floor. In their childlike eagerness, they had, by an oversight, neglected to empty the water from the jars as a preliminary.

The panic-stricken student-teacher had, unluckily, stepped on one of these mobile containers, and fallen base over apex, as the geometry tutor might have insisted, on the dampened floor-boards. To cap it all, at that very moment, and as an encouraging chorus of "Pick yer bloody feet up, miss" rang from her charges, in walked her tutor. It was a nightmare in broad daylight. Orwell's 1984 had crept down the road to Wigan Pier.

It took some time for this gruesome yarn to be recounted, with me playing Wedding Guest to her Ancient Mariner. During about 40 minutes she chain-smoked another eight cigarettes, and I gently upbraided her through the gathering gloom of curling tobacco smoke. I wondered aloud whether maybe she wasn't overdoing the demon weed, and asked for a tag count as between four o'clock and now, which was quarter past five. Trembling fingers examined the all but empty packet clutched tightly in her hand.

"Seventeen," came the tremulous answer, as she sucked hard on that seventeenth ciggy. "Seventeen," I echoed in censorious surprise. "How many do you usually smoke?"

Twice more she inhaled lengthily. "I don't smoke," she said simply.

Yes, school practice was a bitch, and so, according to the students, occasionally was the tutor. But the students did, in their angelic, ask

for trouble. In one scripture lesson for 15-year-old Boothe wench, all green jumpers and hair pins, I was the shaken witness of the shrieked replies offered to a distressed trainee who naively posed the question, "What do you think St Paul did in his spare time?"

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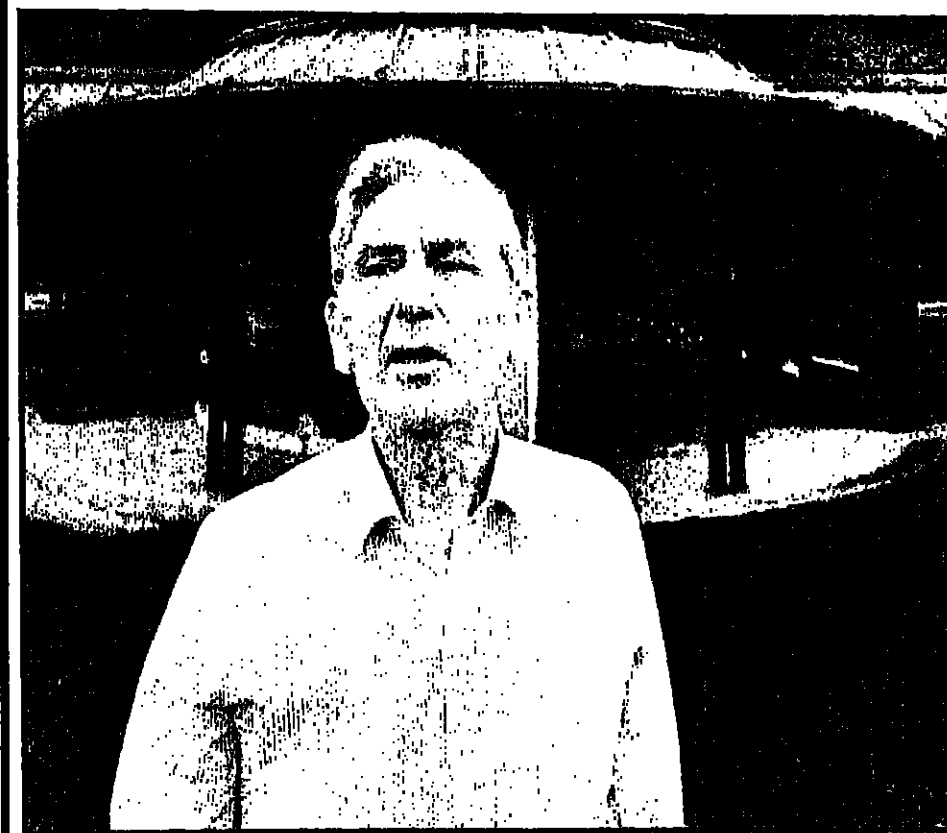
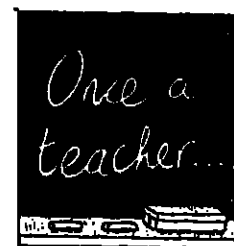
to nurse the younger, would be, say, 44, against the 22 of the probationer, with, for instance, the pupils 10 or 11. There was twice as big a gulf between the rookie teachers and their mentors as between the new recruits and the children. They were both part of the post-war, television, rocking, rolling, atomic age. Fixations occur too readily, and relativities are forgotten. An older teacher would sit in sports jacket and flannels, complaining about the standards of young men teachers in sweaters or young women teachers in trousers. They had forgotten that, when they started, lounge suits, even gowns, were expected, and the teacher who rolled up in a sports jacket was thought of as extremely daring, if not wicked.

Lastly, there are parents. If children, students and teachers suffer the shivering shocks of induction, then parents, invited into frightening institutions once or twice a year, need very careful consideration. At a time when home-school links are more and more felt to be vital, then the welcome on the mat must be spelt out in capital letters. I recall one school where the parents were asked in one afternoon a term. The deputy head was so disrupted by this procedure that he retired to the farthest reaches of a spacious playing-field with his eight year olds. He had first written all the children's names on the blackboard in rank order, having miraculously managed to calculate some global total of marks out of three or four hundred for all the different kinds of work they had completed. The parents stealthily edged into the vacated classroom; rather like the Metropolitan Police occupying the Libyan People's Bureau after the recent siege, wary less the wastepaper basket be booby-trapped. They stood, an uneasy knot of puzzled dams and sires, and examined the blackboard, which must have appeared to them somewhat like the Financial Times Shares Index. Perhaps one nudged another and whispered that, with 67 out of 300, Jimmy Snooks was thirty-fourth in class again.

Not, you will admit, the hospitable, open-armed reception that parents merit. We are all likely to be guilty of not cushioning culture-shocks, just as we shall in the past have been victims. Would that these cultural discomforts were, as the song roars, "so easy to remember and so hard to forget". For, if they were, the social processes of the educational service might be much more sensitively handled.

FEATURES

Up and down the city road



Susan Thomas meets a local historian who used retirement to produce teaching aids

By five thirty the sun had lost its fierceness. A light breeze sighed through the shop doorways of Stoke Newington and the sharp-eyed man in the delicatessen started to pack away the trays of paklava and sticky sweetmeats. In the main street a continuous cross current of humanity – Cockney and Cypriot, Chassidic Jew, West Indian and Sikh – eddied and flowed along the pavements and made sudden surges into the stream of bicycles and juggernauts. Living history.

"Stand here," said Jack Whitehead, stopping abruptly and precipitating a domino effect of bumps and starts all along the pavement. "Now," he said, "see how the road dips down towards the crossing? There, by the taxi? That's where the gravel gives way to clay – King James was confronted by a great mire when he came from the North you know – had to turn and go by Edmonton" (or maybe it was Edgeware). "There, just below, that's where Hackney Brook flows across the road."

And so it did. Just for a moment. The high street disappeared and the old river returned, sleek and dimpled, noisy with wildfowl, and the smell of the marsh gas in its reed beds.

For Jack Whitehead, who retired from teaching at Woodberry Down (but remains its official urban studies researcher) is that enviable thing, a born storyteller. And in two hours of wandering round I learnt more about the impact of disease, drainage and fashion on architecture and population movements, than I did in a term at university.

He is a gentle, scholarly man. Lightly browned, deeply lined and as lively and honest as a 10-year-old. And, now that school is out, he is free to spend every daylight hour studying the cityscape and the heady delights of the Public Records Office as he pulls together the cat's cradle strands of local history.

What started as a collection of resource sheets, maps, census results and architectural drawings for the teachers of Woodberry Down and Westminster Upper School, has become a trio of teachers' workbooks – beautifully designed and illustrated and written with just that hint of eccentricity which is the mark of true scholarship.

His background is as comprehensive as the books and it shows. CDT, urban studies, English and history, an expertise in technical drawing, photography and layout and a real liking for people.

Everything is based on the technology of the period, he says. "For instance I used to ask the children to describe how they would modernize a Victorian terrace house to make it an acceptable twentieth century dwelling."

"That immediately raises questions about safety, health, warmth and lighting – the replacement

of open hearths and kitchen ranges with central heating and modern cookers, electricity and modern lighting, the size of windows. The Victorians used cast iron, stone sills and Welsh flagstones. What has replaced them? Why? Which do they prefer?" It is an approach which he could have used in any lesson and probably did. And it means getting out and looking at the environment. Hence our walk.

Up and down the Abdon Road . . . in and out of Church Street . . . that's the way the river flowed . . . stone replaced by concrete. And everywhere we found craftsmanship and the human side of technology.

"A lovely house this," he said, pausing by Sister's Place which has three whole sheets to itself in *The Growth of Stoke Newington*. "See the faint light and the little wooden porch, more a protection for the door than the eulder. It's got a beautiful M shaped roof . . . now that's a nice design problem for T.D. Just look at the gates – the ribbons and leaves have been hammered out of sheet metal and the berries are all forged."

He trained as a craft teacher, in the tradition of Bransley and Gimson. "I suppose that's where my love of craftsmanship stems from. Come to think of it," he said, gazing appreciatively at a nice piece of forged scrollwork, "I suppose I belong to the last of that generation which hoped to change the world: through an appreciation of beautiful things."

And so saying led the way to the "old" St Mary's Church to show off the tiny, medieval red bricks and pleasant graveyard, where he remembered that only last week an environmental studies group had learned that the green opposite was supposed to be haunted.

"Folk memory says it is an old burial ground and though it's not marked it could well have been a plague pit – close to the church and still a little distance from the houses of the time. That's something else to follow up."

"That is the marvellous thing about this – every day you find some new piece of information. Let's go and look at some flats," he said and set off at a cracking pace to see a newly refurbished block, built in the Depression for the slum dwellers of Hackney and now, after a lick of paint, new external stairwells and rubbish shutters, as good and solid and friendly as the day they went up.

"They are a marvellous piece of updating. When they were built they were provided with sheds to keep the coal and pram and bike in. Now of course Stoke Newington is a smokeless zone, babies go everywhere in little buggies that you keep in the flat and no one would leave a bike where it could be stolen. So what do the architects do?"

"They demolish the sheds and replace them with play areas for the children and take down

one block to make parking spaces for the cars. The result is a clean, spacious environment which reflects the needs of the eighties. That would make an ideal basis for a term's work and of course some of the children may live in them and have parents who grew up in them.

"I only found these flats when I came across a reference to them in a book I was reading. It described them as 'as good as anything currently being put up in France and Germany and much better than anything going up in Park Lane'." He hasn't had time to follow up the Park Lane lot.

Did he miss school, I asked? "Not the hassle," he said firmly. But the kids, yes, he missed them. I bet they loved him. We met one. A dazzling young black woman waiting outside playschool for her own little daughter. "Oh Mr Whitehead, I thought you'd forgotten all about me," she yelped joyously, grabbing his arm. "I'm ever so good now," she laughed at him, all white teeth and glowing red dress. "I was so bad," she confided. "Don't you go telling this lady how awful I was. But I'm not any more and I'd like you to meet my husband."

Now, minus the hassle, he is free to enjoy occasional encounters like this and to concentrate on the books. "I hope," he said fervently, "teachers will never use them as textbooks but photocopy relevant pages, use them as a starting point, perhaps make up a set of questions to go with them. The very worst thing that could happen to them," he said with real horror, "would be that they should become sterile comprehension exercises."

He has strong opinions about libraries too. An ardent admirer of the national library system, he sees them as the centre of the cultural universe and would like to find the school library stocked with maps, census results, geological surveys and original material collected by pupils and staff.

"So much valuable work is regularly done by teachers and then lost. If it were stored centrally it could be built on instead of being repeated." So much is common sense. The next bit is more revolutionary.

"If the children produce new work about the area . . . if they do creative writing – 'What it is like to live in my house', say, then in 20 years' time that will be a valuable piece of historical evidence." It just the same way that something written in the forties about eating snook or dried eggs or going into the shelters, would be now.

"Then if we are going to treat the children's work as a worthwhile piece of evidence, we are justified in asking them to make several drafts and that is a bonus in itself. There is also the question of respecting other people's expertise – parents, grandparents, neighbours."

"If you keep this material in the classroom or restrict it to one subject or one teacher, inevitably it is lost."

"Every school library should have the definitive material on its own area. After all," he explained, "we judge a library by its depth. Just as we go to specialist libraries for material on medicine or law or architecture, so the school library should become the repository for in-depth material on the locality." What a lovely idea.

Any school in need of guidelines could start with the Whitehead books. True they make particular reference to Paddington and Stoke Newington but the approach is universal. Would it make their lessons more interesting if CDT or English teachers were as familiar with the county war damage maps as they are with John Speede's decorative cartography. Do immigration patterns or the coming of the railways have any relevance to the teaching of R1? Only careful thought and a lot of walking will tell.

After three miles of London pavements, my feet ached and a drowsy numbness not only seeped but threatened to submerge me so we went in search of tea.

Perhaps, he said, as we munched banana cake, the nicest thing he had discovered so far is the great body of experts out there, ready and dying to share their knowledge. "Archivists up and down the country are only too happy to send me material that I couldn't get anywhere if I tried to buy it."

"If schools just thought out what they needed, got a definite policy and then asked for help they would find a world full of typists, photographers, layout artists and local historians just waiting for the satisfaction of seeing their talents recognized."

He conducted me, past the reservoirs fitted with filter beds after the 1852 cholera outbreak and through the Woodberry Down estate where the little dairy once stood, to the tube station. And then he said goodbye and disappeared smartly into the distance – a sturdy brown figure, swinging a faded holdall and moving like a man half his age.

The Growth of Stoke Newington £4.50 + £1.00 p&p.

Where We Live – Paddington £1.50 + £0.50 p&p; each from The Urban Studies Book Fund, 55A Parliament Hill, London NW3.

ARTS

Illusion and reality

Kenny Mathieson at the Edinburgh Festival

The rumblings which greeted new Director Frank Dunlop's early promise to make the Festival more accessible to the ordinary citizens of Edinburgh reached new heights of paranoia with the election of the Labour administration in May, fuelled by some harsh-sounding threats from that quarter. Recently, an uneasy peace has reigned; assurances have been delivered, and the Arts Minister has pronounced himself satisfied that no murderous intent lurks in the City Chambers. Nonetheless, the new Council wish to see a less elitist, more democratic Arts establishment in Edinburgh, concerned as much with the all-year provision of art across a broad spectrum as with the extension of the Festival itself. Like the hugely popular *Glenn Gould Fireworks Concert*, *Treasures from the Smithsonian Institution*, at the Royal Scottish Museum until November 4, has provided an opportunity to put some of this admirable theory into practice.

The exhibition itself extends to include an eclectic display of items from America's great complex museums, not all of which are American. Moving in time from a block of petrified wood, some 200 million years old to space technology, and in range from paintings and sculpture to notorious hats worn by Jimmy Durante and Larry Hagman, it caters for a wide variety of tastes, and will be seen only in Edinburgh. In addition, various supporting musical acts have agreed to play in the housing estates around the city, a move warmly welcomed by the Council as precisely the kind of popularization without declining standards they seek. Time alone will reveal how genuine a change is taking place: it is too soon to determine if this is a

significant precedent, or merely another gesture. The debate may only have begun.

New York's Clurman Theatre form the centrepiece of a considerable Samuel Beckett celebration at the Churchill Theatre, presenting five recent short works. They reflect typical concerns: an old man, only his face and shock of hair lit, listens in silence to two voices speak of the past in *That Time*; two sit at a table in *Ohio Impromptu*, one reading, the other listening, occasionally halting the flow with a rap of his hand. *A Piece of Monologue* offers a quintessential Beckett figure, assailed by memory of the unaccountable, while cyclic repetitions of futility constitute *What Where*. *Catastrophe* offers a parable of the debasement of art in a totalitarian society, as the director and his terror-stricken assistant prepare a figure on stage; the artist himself, raised on his pedestal but with his face hidden, in silence, is the object to be formed and displayed. Written for Vaclav Havel, it is unusually politically pointed, and ends on a note of commingled defiance and despair.

The performances are of the highest standard, and serve to remind us that powerful theatrical experiences Beckett's works are, something which does not always emerge from the page. Concerned with the largest of topics—time, memory, meaning, despair, death—they focus upon them with an almost unendurable precision, a painful deliberation of language and gesture. Presented as directed by the late Alan Schneider in New York, they offer a tribute to both men. Elsewhere, another recent work by a major modern playwright receives its British premiere from the enterprising Salford

University Theatre Company. Arthur Miller's *Two-Way Mirror* contains a pair of distinct works, imaginatively tailored to the limitations of the hall by Geoffrey Gaskin, a feat requiring the mass movement of the audience during a short interval.

Elegy for a Lady attains a kind of quiet perfection rarely encountered on stage. A man enters a shop to buy a gift for a dying woman; the owner is increasingly drawn into the relationship he describes; he departs, with a watch she has insisted he takes, each having come to some accommodation with the situation. The events, however, are rendered ambiguous: the play begins and ends on a darkened stage; the involvement of the woman hints that she may be the principal, may indeed be imagining this encounter. John Axon and Kate Deyve play this stricken assistant with great sensitivity and restraint, and go on to rise admirably to the challenge of *Some Kind of Love Story*, more explicitly concerned with the kind of breakdown of personality, and of reality itself, hinted at in *Elegy*.

If it has not quite the unity and control of that work, it seems more demanding for the players, particularly the role of the schizophrenic Angela. Both, in their different ways, are social dramas played out at the shifting borderline between illusion and reality, sanity and madness, and are indicative of a shift in Miller's recent work. It remains, together with the Black Theatre Co-operative's marvellously played productions of Edgar White's fable of exile and return, *Redemption Song*, the most memorable of the Fringe productions I have seen this year.

Miller's tale

A View from the Bridge
By Arthur Miller
Young Vic, September 4

"You tend to think that Tennessee Williams is the writer about sensuality and sex. I find *A View from the Bridge* a very sexual play. It's completely unstated but there it is in this tiny confined apartment. It's a very passionate play, but passionate more through denial of desires than by expression of them."

So says Roger Smith, whose production of *A View from the Bridge* opens at the Young Vic next week. His will be the first London revival of the play since the original Peter Brook production in 1956. Times have changed. In the fifties the play's notorious all-male kiss led to objections from the Lord Chamberlain: patrons had to join a club to see the play. People under the age of discretion were doubtless barred. Now comes a production which is likely to attract a largely youthful audience. Roger Smith believes that one of the good reasons for reviving the play is that audiences of all ages are probably better equipped now to understand it. "Our awareness of the psychology of relationships is better than it was 28 years ago. So what's going on under the play one is more able to tap now than then."

When Miller wrote the play he was much preoccupied by the question of the tragic stature attainable by "the common man". His protagonist, Eddie Carbone, is a Brooklyn Italian longshoreman whose fall from grace turns on an act of treachery against the community he reveres. Relatives from Italy have entered America illegally and are hiding out in Eddie's apartment. One of them, Rodolpho, falls in love with Eddie's 17-year-old niece Catherine. Eddie's reasonable urge to protect her is mixed with a disturbing desire for her which he won't acknow-

ledge. He grows rapidly more desperate that no one shares his suspicions that Rodolpho "ain't right" and in the end resorts to shopping his cousins to the authorities. He is publicly denounced as a traitor, and dies in a street fight attempting to rescue his "name".

Smith is clearly very impressed by the appeal of Eddie's character and regards him as a bona fide tragic figure. "It's a man who's come to his limit, to the end of his reason, to the end of his intelligence. He can't face, neither does he really know, what is driving him. That's what gives him his dignity and his tragedy."

When Miller visited London in July he talked to Smith about the play, and expressed a misgiving about the 1956 production. He felt, apparently, that what had been missing was an authentic portrayal of working-class people. He complained that "everyone sounded as if they'd come from the Foreign Office". He was keen to make the Young Vic might like to transpose the action to England — to London, or Liverpool. Smith didn't take to the idea. "The rhythm of the language is so specific to Italian Brooklyn that you would have to start rephrasing and changing words. And in any case that kind of immigrant problem as far as Italians are concerned we don't have."

He is confident that the problem Miller fears will not arise again. Since 1956 more actors have come from working-class backgrounds. It's far easier now, he says, to portray working people authentically. He places great emphasis on a proper understanding of the specific cultural setting that produces an Eddie Carbone. The waterfront is "macho world, a world that accepts violence, a world of men, respect, honour". What makes Rodolpho "not right" in Eddie's eyes is his openness. The world Eddie inhabits "can't face up to any so-called feminine feeling. The fear of it leads to great insecurity. The climactic kiss that Eddie gives Rodolpho, ostensibly to prove the latter's homosexuality, gives expression to that insecurity. It also, Smith suggests, has echoes of the Mafia kiss of death."

Lynne Truss

Play back

Alan Bennett season
National Film Theatre, from next Wednesday

Next week the National Film Theatre launches a season of all Alan Bennett's television plays which will culminate in a *Guardian* lecture appearance on September 19. With the universal praise of *An Englishman Abroad* and a special BAFTA award for his contribution to the medium, Bennett is at last being acknowledged for the master he is.

When looking for a common element in Bennett's work it is easy — and very enjoyable — to concentrate on the language. "All that's come in now. Lemon in you tea. Yoghurt. Carrying babies on your back. We weren't brought up for any of that. It was thought a bit revolutionary for having metaphors." Bennett delights in misplaced metaphors: his characters "have a stab" at Paris, take air travel "in their stride", practise rock-climbing before "jumping in at the deep end", and (unforgettably) "limber up" for O levels. Writing in an introduction to a collection of these plays Bennett says that what strikes him is the repetition of incidents. "Why am I obsessed with hang-gliding, for instance? What is it compels the mind about indoor sports centres or climbing, indoor rock-climbing and sub-aqua?"

There are of course larger preoccupations at work too. Interestingly, sub-aqua is mentioned twice in the same context: it provides an excuse for a young person not to visit a hospital or cemetery with his relatives. Bennett often concentrates on families drawn together through a duty to the dying (*Intensive Care*, *Rolling Home*); on the way isolated people respond to intervention from professional carers in homes, hospitals and old people's clubs (*Sunset Across the Bay*, *A Woman of No Importance*); and on the intrusiveness of social workers and other observers (*Our Whistle*, *Say Something Happened*).

This last, to be shown on September 16, is a simple and moving play in which an elderly couple (Thora Hird and Hugh Lloyd) allow an inexperienced social worker (Julie Walters) into their home. Her job is to persuade them that they are "at risk", but she repeatedly breaks any human contact she establishes with them by quoting from relevant sections of her handbook: "The refusal to recognize the approach of old age and the possibility of infirmity is entirely natural". The play turns on this very refusal. They have no desire to be marked out as old people: "They put you on a register, next minute you're sitting round banging a tambourine."

Say Something Happened is a naturalistic reworking of Bennett's absurdist stage play *Enjoy*, which didn't go down too well with the critics; nor did his only experimental television work *The Old Crowd* directed by Lindsay Anderson for London Weekend in 1978.

The outrage with which critics responded to the play has become legendary so it will be interesting to see it again (September 8). In the context of Bennett's other works the hostility may seem less surprising. Critics are not surprisingly angry at being trapped by their own success, and on the occasion of *The Old Crowd* Bennett complained to *The Sunday Times*: "People say, 'Oh, but that's what you do best. You should stick to doing things that are very particular and peculiar'. But what people never understand is that you often don't like what you do best." A sobering thought with which to approach this retrospective season.

LT

Next week

John Weightman reviews Daniel Boorstin's *The Discoverers: A History of Man's Search to Know His World and Himself*.

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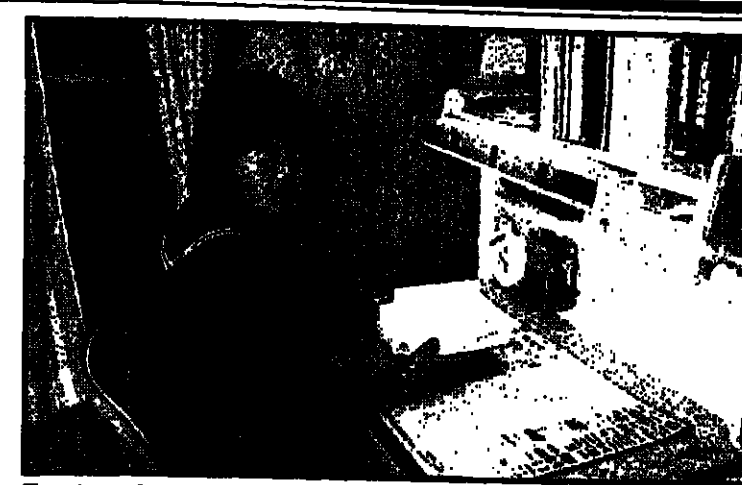
Driven by the dark engine

Japan's High Schools. By Thomas P. Rohlen.
University of California £10.95.
0 520 04863 6

The year 2000 will be the beginning of the "Japanese century", a well known political pundit recently predicted. Whether this proves to be the case, certainly few societies today have captured Western fascination more: Japan's impressive industrial prowess, based on a curious blend of Confucian thought and ultra-high tech, has made it the one everyone seems to want to crack. Yet the task is not easy. Formidable linguistic and social barriers keep most foreigners at bay.

Dr Rohlen, an American anthropologist, has risen admirably to the challenge. "Education is the cheap defence of nations," wrote Edmund Burke — no nation notes Rohlen, has taken this apothem more to heart; indeed, in analysing Japanese secondary education he tells us more about what makes that country tick than most recent work. Fluent in both written and spoken Japanese and, most important, highly attuned to the currents below the surface — Rohlen spent 14 months observing five secondary schools in Kobe, a cosmopolitan port town some 300 miles south of Tokyo. The result is a scholarly, yet remarkably unstuffy, rendering of what he deems to be a key socialization period — his premise being that high school is the prime time when cultural ideals, attitudes and highly efficient work patterns are, for the majority of Japanese, indelibly set.

Japan's meritocracy is the underlying theme of the book. Dr to the interplay of historical and philosophical forces, Rohlen argues, Japan may well be the most meritocratic society on earth today. And it's in the country's educational system that he sees the seeds of this meritocratic order: rather than the traditional social class symbols of capitalism, the author writes, it is educational attainment more than any other factor which

Tomoka settles down to two hours homework. One of the illustrations in *A Family in Japan* (Wayland £4.25) to be reviewed shortly.

determines one's place within Japanese society.

The outcome of all this is a country where there exists an admirable degree of equal educational opportunity up to the age of 12. After that, children must sit an awesome high school entrance exam to determine their school placement within an eight to ten tier ranking system — but that's only the beginning.

Currently in Japan 90 per cent of all high school students aspire to higher education. Hence the inflated importance of the country's university entrance exams. Indeed, an enormous amount of teenage energy is geared solely towards this event — a point that cannot be overstated. One's institution of higher education is the crucial final step in establishing adult social placement, and everybody knows it. The end result, observes Rohlen, is an educational system driven by the "dark engine" of the university entrance exam. The situation is so extreme, in fact, that there's currently an outcry to lessen the inordinate pressure of this incubus — to no avail. As Rohlen shrewdly shows, it is too deeply entrenched in both the psyche and the success of Japanese society for any substantive change to take place.

The by-product of such an obsessively exam-oriented high school environment is two-fold. On the one hand, Japanese are generally imbued with all those qualities needed to succeed outstandingly in today's technological world — ie diligence, self-sacrifice, coping well with repetition; while on the other, the thrust of Japanese high school education is

necessarily encyclopaedic rather than analytic.

This certainly makes for remarkable educational efficiency: high school students achieve a greater average level in science and mathematics than those of any other nation, and the country reaps great rewards economically. But such efficiency comes at a price. While it produces a society that's well run, the educational style is "shallow and uninspired". Rohlen concludes: it is a system "without heart".

The book is hard to fault. To his credit, the author has succeeded in covering his subject from every angle, yet never sacrifices depth for breadth. Greatest among the many strengths, however, is his sheer readability; never have I encountered a work on modern Japan which so skillfully captures what is intrinsically unique about the society. Indeed, Rohlen proves that comparative education need not be a litany of lifeless facts — having had the precious opportunity of such extensive fly-on-the-wall fieldwork (this is the first published account in either Japanese or English of an observational nature), he doesn't waste it. His points are solid and fully researched, but the real impact comes from his continual use of cogent anecdote. The author's elegant style and sharp eye have in fact made his book as page-turning as a well-written novel.

Japan's High Schools deserves to be widely read. It will be, without question, the definitive work on the subject for many years to come.

Linda Joffe

African plays and playwrights

The Development of African Drama.
By Michael Etherton.
Hutchinson University Library for Africa £12.00 and £5.95.

The title of this book is perhaps misleading in that the argument does not in fact concentrate on the historical development of African drama from indigenous forms of theatre to contemporary conditions and characteristics. Small wonder, considering that the subject matter, "forms, styles, and social functions of African theatre, both traditional and contemporary, are so infinitely varied as to defy easy definition. On the other hand, the author assumes that all works in English by African playwrights can be compared with one another on the basis of their socio-political commitment, regardless of the very different cultural and historical influences upon them.

Insightful insights occur throughout the work, but occasional misreadings do crop up where a given work is not amenable to the criterion of judgment imposed upon it.

The most fascinating section, the first two chapters and the last, discuss African drama as both literature and performance, while emphasizing its socio-political relevance in the process of rapid modernization which the various traditional cultures are now undergoing. The intervening five chapters consider particular plays under headings such as adaptations of European classics, plays about anti-colonialism, and works of post-independence political protest. An admirable balance is achieved by giving equal attention to work of both popular and art theatres, certainly a welcome change from the exclusive con-

cern in academic circles for drama as high literary art. Etherton is especially informative on the social analysis and production methods of contemporary travelling companies as well as of those of community workshops. He is also keenly sensitive to the ambiguity of developing literary proficiency in order to preserve the popular performing arts while actually developing an elite literary culture which spells doom for that which it would preserve. But, a discussion of traditional African theatre and its relation to contemporary manifestations is needed to counter-balance the author's ideological commitment to the "drama process" as a means of raising the level of political consciousness at the grass roots, of working out local problems in aesthetic/therapeutic workshops.

Some attention to traditional dramatic forms and their social functions might have occasioned a more objective view of Clark's *Ozidi*, for example, which surely need not be subjected to either a realistic (Eurocentric?) reading, or to a predetermined production method. The play's finer points as well as delicate cues are functions of its traditional origin, and the piece will not fit comfortably into the offered thesis. In the same way the comparison of Rotimi's *Onkweh* with Husein's *Kinjekelle* shows significant signs of strain, in that Rotimi celebrates a spectacular and ritualized victimization by circumstance, while the critic extols the psychological cut and character thrust of heroic tragedy.

The two world views are not comparable and something less than justice is done to Rotimi's theatrical vision. Southern Africa's *Midnight of the Ancestors* is also slighted, and in a comparison with Hevi's *Amave* we are told that

"there is a lack of real meaning in the play". The same vein is read that "a great deal of contemporary drama in Nigeria has tended to be uncritical, in any coherent analytical sense, of the society or of the body politic... Types are satirized — they may even be class types — but invariably they are the architects of their own misfortunes and the cause of their downfall. This may reflect the satire in the performance traditions of Nigeria and their inherently conservative function of preserving the status quo by the timely public criticism of the excesses of the traditional elite."

The words conservative and elite are used here in a very particular sense. Should all social analysis be revolutionary? Are the tricksters of folklore, as Southern Africa's dramatized and updated Ananse tale, to be identified as members of a traditional elite? Dramatic situations and characters based on traditional precedents are not necessarily best measured according to the criteria of European socialism.

The author intends his study for African students of drama in Africa, and in the main they will benefit greatly by it, but there are one or two technical definitions and assumptions which tend to mislead. The glossary, for example, confuses the concept of dramatic characters as personifications with that of allegory as the basis of composition or structure, while the definition of plot, naturalism, procession arch, and ritual theatre leave much to be desired in terms of clarity and completeness. Such carping criticism notwithstanding, the work is far and away a cut above anything available on the subject.

Richard Taylor

Revolutionary portrait

Family Portrait with Fidel. By Carlos Franqui. Translated by Alfred MacAdam.
Jonathan Cape £12.95 and £5.95

At last, an insider's book which puts a bit of flesh onto the official bones of Fidel Castro, rather too much, perhaps, for the great man's own taste. Carlos Franqui, a youthful Communist, quit the party to join Castro's *barbudos* — the bearded ones — fighting the Batista regime in the Sierra Maestra. After the victory, Franqui edited *Revolution*, a lively and irreverent journal. Outside the real circles of power, he still seems to have known everyone who was anyone in the new Cuba and was around, with an excellent journalist's ear, when all manner of interesting and important things were going on.

The specialists will have to judge whether everything happened just as Franqui says, but for general readers his sardonic, often bitchy and eventually bitter, observations and anecdotes about Fidel and those around him make excellent reading (aided greatly by the translation of Alfred J. MacAdam). In the euphoric early days, Franqui relates, an impressive warrior's beard was so much in fashion that razor blade sales plummeted. He had never liked his, so had it shaved off. Castro was genuinely outraged. "Listen Fidel," says Franqui, "the whiskers were mine weren't they?" "No! No! Nobody's allowed to shave round here." According to Franqui, he got the last word by telling Castro that "somebody there it only be one set of whiskers around here — yours."

At a booze-up with the Russians in New York after one UN session, some of the Cubans with Castro were needed to tell him about himself. Instead, he turned the tables neatly by pointing to Gromyko and observing, "Cubans, form your revolutionary tribunal and sentence Gromyko, the man who recognised Batista." There was a deadly silence, Franqui recalls, though the great survivor appeared to be quite unruffled (and later proved to be the only Russian who knew to how handle Cuban cigars with proper respect).

Because he so obviously liked and admired the man he chose to follow into the hills, Franqui's penetrating assessment of Castro's complex personality sounds pretty convincing. The great improviser, Franqui argues, whose style has never really changed, power resides in him alone, never to be shared with those from whom he expects unconditional loyalty. Fellow guerrilla heroes like Huber Matos who crossed him after the victory were ruthlessly struck down (Matos got 20 years after a trial in which, on Castro's orders, he was not permitted to speak in his own defence). "Fidel had an innate distrust of the people," Franqui writes. "He preferred militarisation to organisation. He also thought that in peacetime and economics the same rules applied as in guerrilla fighting — that a group of leaders could change everything."

As the Communists tightened their grip on power under Castro, life got increasingly hard for people like Carlos Franqui who insisted on arguing about the revolution belonged to all Cubans. The accounts of organised persecution of intellectuals and artists, of grubby campaigns against prostitutes, homosexuals and other drop-outs who offered "revolutionary morality" will not please those who still believe Castro can do no wrong. Franqui's acerbic pen portraits of men like Fidel's brother Raúl, who comes across as an apparatus thug, and Che Guevara, likeable but totally out of his depth in the minutiae of political warfare, are dotted pleasantly around the book. As for the author, he now lives in exile in Italy.

Phillip Jacobson

Life after school

Professional and Vocational Degree Course Offers — 1994/95. By Brian Heap.
Career Consultants Ltd. £5.50.
0 85660 0849
The Sunday Times Good University Guide. By Peter Wilby.
Granada Publishing £4.95.
0 246 12387 7

With large cohorts of children born in the late 1960s now reaching the age of majority, only to find that government cutbacks have reduced the number of places available in higher education, several handbooks have appeared to help applicants cut a path through the post-18 jungle. In times of economic hardship the thoughts of many turn to professional and vocational degrees which might ensure a decent meal ticket, so Brian Heap's volume on the A level grades such courses require is very timely.

The book is full of the information which applicants will need, starting with the inevitable "how to choose a course" section, now more or less obligatory in these compendia, before going on to the main body of the text, over 120 pages of minute detail on everything from accountancy to wood science.

In each field one can discover which universities, polytechnics or colleges offer degree courses, what A level grades are normally needed, whether

there is a sandwich course or industrial placement, professional examinations taken, alternative and related careers, and useful addresses. Interested in information technology? Try St Andrews (BBC) or Leicester Polytechnic (CD). Media studies? Central London Polytechnic (CC) or Dorset (EEE). Brewing? Only Heriot-Watt for which you need DDE on entry, and, if you over-indulge in the product, will have DT on exit.

Brian Heap's book is excellent value, as is Peter Wilby's *Good University Guide*, which deals with the whole higher education sector and grew out of his comprehensive coverage of the topic in five issues of the *Sunday Times* magazine last year. The information is based on answers to questionnaires, returned by all institutions except, for some reason, Bristol University, Queen's Belfast and Bournemouth College.

Each section gives most useful details of student numbers, A level score needed, employment prospects, academic and social facilities, male/female ratio and student appraisal, some of it in flip "alternative prospectus" terms. Thus Reading University is said to be good for opera, Morris dancing and ploughing but not for wild parties. I must remember to send my daughter there.

E C Wragg

To amuse the battle-weary

The Harpole Report. By J. J. Carr.
Penguin £1.75. 0 1400 6920 8

This fictional account of life in a primary school tells the story of its head, George Harpole, via his private journal and a series of memoirs. Penguin have released it twelve years after its original publication, so it has a strong flavour of the 1960s about it.

Though not a side-splitter, it may gently amuse the more battle-weary as poor old Harpole fights a largely losing battle against his colleagues, pupils and the local authority's administrative machine. My favourite memo exchange was: Croser to Harpole: "Can I have a dozen new English exercise books?" Harpole to Croser: "No".

ECW

Good lads?

A Credit to the Force
National Youth Theatre
Peacock Park
Royal Court Activists Youth Theatre

Christopher Short's play about how the police are trained to deal with riot and civil insurrection is so polite, so abstract and meaty-mouthed that the only real controversy to erupt on the press night came when a lady from the BBC accused me of burning her ear with a cigarette.

A Credit to the Force, which opened this year's National Youth Theatre season, certainly had explosive potential but turned out to be a rather dull affair. Directed by Graham Chinn, it painted a terrifying and totally convincing picture of 20 young police cadets wearing boots and helmets, crouching defensively behind plastic riot shields — but did next to nothing with it. The lads, inevitably a bunch of sociological allsorts with backgrounds ranging from Ulster to Oxford, sometimes muttered darkly about "going in". They disliked "blacks in Brixton" and "sodding miners", but they were plainly meant to be Good Lads at heart. You could tell that because one of the training officers shouted "Well done, the police!" after each and every exercise.

Even the impossibly contrived story of PC Malcolm Shepherd, the best the play could do by way of a plot, elicited



no firm comment, anger or commitment from the playwright. Jonathan Wingrave tried hard to flesh out the character of the cadet who had escaped to Hendon from a mining village, a father who insisted on working despite the strike and a militant, picketing brother. Poor Malcolm. For some reason all that made him think he knew about the real world. Inevitably he left the course, complaining that "it's unreal, it's deceptive — and it's bloody dangerous". Dramatically speaking, I'd love to have been able to say the same of the play.

Meanwhile, the Royal Court Activists, displaced from their usual home in the Court's Theatre Upstairs, are serving up some home-made pie in the sky at the Man in the Moon pub down the road.

It is a shameless exploitation of the *Equus* idea they're passing off as *Peacock Park*. Set in a young people's

therapy and guidance unit, it has Tim, a young liberal counsellor/Dysart-figure encouraging a group of adolescent weirdos to act out the traumatic moments of their uniformly shabby lives. They don't take much persuading, and we get tableaux depicting alienation, masturbation, contraception (everything except blinding horses).

No less than 20 individuals are named as contributing to the script. Sheffield is not among them. He should be, for Tim even just dreams, in *Equus* Martin Dysart dreams of carrying up children; in *Peacock Park*, maybe because of the generation gap, Tim tells us through an awkward letter-monologue that he's dreamt of stabbing his father. There's gratitude for you. Come on, Activists, you've done far better than this.

Hugh David

In modern dress

Romeo and Juliet.
Suffolk Young People's Theatre.
Theatre Royal, Bury St Edmunds.
The Princess and the Swineherd.
Wolsey Youth Theatre. Wolsey Theatre, Ipswich.

There is, of course no imperative for a summer school to attempt a formal staging of its set text, something that inexperience and variable ability

usually make a pale imitation of a professional production. Indeed, work-in-progress — developed improvisations, explorations, parallel work on relevant material — may often be of more interest to an audience as well as to the young actors themselves.

(Suspect the Suffolk Young People's Theatre rehearsal period was much more interesting and thoughtful than its resultant performances might imply. Although it may have been a useful workshop idea, the Belfast setting (with the accompanying uncomfortable Belfast accents) proved limiting, and unilluminating over the long haul of the nearly full text, despite the occasional pluses of a decayed urban environment of boarded-up buildings, chicken wire, riot shields and shoulder holsters, the Capulets' cell and a Mercutio (Mark Jenner) who would not have looked out of place twirling a baton for an Orange band).

The play was prefaced by Andrew Dunnington's *Strong* and *Weak*, a

lyrical "I will be your Armalite", delivered by Matthew Knight (Romeo) and Keri Adams (Juliet) for a commitment and understanding that contrasted with the conventionality of their subsequent performances.

At the Wolsey meanwhile, a fairly tale was succumbing to feminism. The heroine refuses to marry the hero as she wants to be Empress in her own right — not a dam eye in the house. Where the Wolsey Youth Theatre is always so impressive is in the sophisticated simplicity of its narrative devices and action set-pieces, where the very economy of means is itself attractive and amusing: for instance, a chase through a forest with every spare body a bush or a beast; a collective evocation of Magna Carta; "Hail to the Emperor! Grow! Grow! Grow!" or a small, uniformed child shifting a few inches being described as "the army on the move".

Jul Burrows

BOOKS



A triptych of painted panels showing a man flanked by Serapis and Isis, Egyptian gods worshipped by Vespasian, in one of many full colour illustrations in *The Romans: their gods and their beliefs*, by Margaret Lytleton and Werner Forman, a lavishly produced volume published by Orbis (£12.50).

Girls will be girls?

Girls and Boys: The Limits of Non-Sexist Childrearing. By Sara Stein. Chatto and Windus £8.95 and £4.95.

Sara Stein is undoubtedly a caring, sensitive lady who is very concerned about families and their problems. She is also a New Yorker, who writes from her cultural fortress as though it were the norm for the world.

Freudian ways of looking at the world tend to dominate her arguments. As the proud mother of four sons, for example, she feels they have provided her with some compensation for her childhood yearnings to be male. Yet even then she knew that a tomboy wasn't a real boy, a truth which has become the reason for this book - to find the kernel of difference between masculine and feminine.

Stein's central thesis is that there are real biological differences between the sexes, many of them psychological, which emerge at the appropriate stage of maturity and for which it is not possible to find a gene, like grey hair. Although she accepts that ways of upbringing can have an effect in accentuating these differences, she will not allow that they are directly responsible, insisting that the biological imperative will out. Stein points out, for example, that "Our adoption of blue jeans as a unisex uniform was not widely accepted by children. Little girls sought to differentiate themselves from little boys by preferring Calvin Kleins to Levis".

There is some lip-service paid in the book to styles of upbringing in other cultures, such as those contentious New Guinea tribes of Margaret Mead, but the overwhelming body of reference is to the American scene where "mothers have traditionally been the ones to dry tears, bake cookies . . ." and stay at home waiting for the real event of the day, the gladsome call "Daddy's home": mothers coming home from work, she explains, usually get the day's complaints.

Having set this cosy middle-class scene as typical of all human life, the author protests that those who would want to change it, particularly a feminist called Letty Cottin Pogrebin (who is gently put right throughout the book), serve only to confuse parents: the beleaguered children soon sort themselves out. Such misguided people

might say, for example, "A man could be male even if he found his gifts most apt for childrearing; a woman could be female and pursue mathematics".

As a biologist/reasonologist, Stein spends a chapter reasoning from the world of chimps as evidence of our early ancestry. She concludes that as their sex roles are clear cut, then ours should be too; but does not draw similar conclusions from their rampant promiscuity. Sex roles, she argues, are a survival mechanism. As hominids became human and women's pelvises became enlarged to allow the passage of the bigger brains of their infants, their running became less swift and so they had to be fed and cared for by their menfolk while encumbered with little children. One can imagine primeval woman sitting in her nest cave, inquiring solicitously on hubby's return: "Had a good day in the forest, dear?"

It would have been less far-fetched if she had chosen to illustrate her arguments with examples from primitive human society. But then she might have found that the women not only give birth, but provide most of the food too; the men doing the really important things like killing animals and attending to religious rituals such as the rebirthing (initiation) ceremonies.

But, the biologist continues: it is crucial to our species that boys "slam doors and join clubs, just as girls bake cookies and whisper secrets". Stand up any parent whose son has not whispered secrets and whose daughter has not slammed doors.

However, in spite of the many American academic works to which she refers, Stein's understanding of psychology is not impressive. For instance, a high proportion of the reasons given for believing that boys and girls function differently is because of what they tell researchers, as though they had been reared in a vacuum. When she applauds the little girls who want to grow up to be brides, or little boys who want to be truck drivers, does she think they pick those concepts off trees? It is also difficult to accept that three-year-old girls actually prefer a purse as a going home party present, to a red fire-engine with squirting hose which boys are more likely to get. Most British children have to be satisfied with the sexy combination of a balloon and a tube of Smarties.

Alternatively, the author turns to

classical Freudian psycho-analysis. A chapter is devoted to the infant's discovery of his or her genitals. The typical male two-year-old, for example, "does his best not to see what he has already observed; his mother (urinating) does not have a penis". Quoting heavily from a psychoanalyst who has watched many parents and children in her consulting rooms, there is the story of the tiny girl who, while showering with her mother, pulled at her pubic hair, desperate to find a penis. Her disappointment then brought about her pathological hair pulling. Any question of either biased research samples or investigators would doubtless be churlish.

Like anyone trying to prove a point, Stein's references are also carefully chosen. There is but one fleeting sentence given, for example, to all the important work on girls' learned helplessness. Not a whisper (even a feminine one) about the effects of efficient contraception, nor about the widely used concept of "locus of control" which is used to explain individual and group feelings of autonomy, often poor in both women and the lower social classes. Indeed, social class differences can also be distinguished in babies of about a year old, but then perhaps they are biological too.

Stein sees the feminist movement, as being formed of women who are still disappointed in their penisless mothers. However, she writes that "Non-sexists could wipe out all our toy stores, television shows, picture books, and Little Leagues to no avail. As far as we can tell, girls become girls and boys become boys without them". On that point she is surely right: real change has to be further reaching. In Stein's terms "The bold experiment to raise non-sexist children is not working". . . children are sticking to their sex-roles in spite of their parents, the children of women doctors do not believe that women can be doctors, and hairy arm men that you're smart. Though it is clearly impossible to bring children up without a culture, in order to see how their sexuality would show itself, it is a pity that someone who writes as skillfully as Sara Stein should be unable to take a more objective view of the world.

Joan Freeman

Scrabble players' aid

Who Cares About English Usage? By David Crystal. Pelican £1.95.

Words. By Paul Dickson. Arena £3.50.

David Crystal's *Who Cares About English Usage?* was written partly in response to the many queries and comments about the English language sent in by listeners to his Radio 4 programme *Speak Out*, and in a very informal and often amusing language.

In his Introduction Crystal is careful to stress that most of the linguistic problems he explores in the book do not have "simple answers in terms of Right vs Wrong, or Correct vs Incorrect". This is not intended as a grammar or as a reference book on the lines

of Fowler's *Modern English Usage*, but instead as a guide to certain linguistic oddities, to the areas in which ambiguities can occur, and underlines modern linguistic trends. However, the quizzes devised by Crystal to make the reader think seriously about his or her use of language will be found by many to be elementary and the average reader's everyday knowledge of the language will no doubt be more than adequate to deal with such problems, which leads one to ask, at what audience is this book directed? The problems which it clarifies are none the less among the most fundamental points of English grammar.

If grammar forms the skeleton of language, words make up the flesh. Paul Dickson's *Words* is a collection of terms both old and new, forgotten, and

newly-invented, rare or just plain improbable. Sadly, few of the entries include even a vague indication of their derivation, the majority being listed with neither a guide to pronunciation nor an explanation of their origin. This is particularly wanting in the case of words like "telegophusclousippopunkius", an alternative way of saying "very good" or "very fine", whose absence in the *Oxford English Dictionary* casts some doubt on its authenticity. The collection, however, is not intended as an authorized dictionary of unusual words. An invaluable help to lovers of Scrabble and other word games, *Words* is also a highly entertaining read for those who enjoy the more eccentric side of our language.

Rachel Neaman

Parrott patter

Children's talk. By Catherine Garvey. Fontana £2.95. 0 00 636594 9.

According to its distinguished editors, "The Developing Child" series is designed for parents, educators, students of psychology, and indeed for any of the increasingly numerous professional who are "responsible for raising a new generation". The common reader will need uncommon pertinacity to get through the terminological paraphernalia - locutionary, illocutionary, perlocutionary - that dog the opening chapters of *Children's Talk*.

Methodological expositions usually impress upon us the unprecedented difficulty, importance and originality of the author's research. This account is undoubtedly the fruit of enormous labour. For 10 years Professor Catherine Garvey has painstakingly collected video and audio-recordings of three, four and five-year-olds in conversation. Most of the children were observed (by unseen adults) in pairs in the laboratory-playroom - not the most stimulating of environments, despite the provision of assorted toys, including carpenter's tools and two ladies' handbags containing jewellery. (Listlessly, the incarcerated kids wonder what the others are up to: "How long before our friends come back?")

In addition, three mothers collaborated in producing longitudinal studies of younger children from families associated with the university. We are not told where, an omission which needlessly diminishes the dialectal interest of the sample. Frequent references to "pals", Macdonald's, and Raggedy Ann suggest that an occasional use of "nappies" for "diapers" and "Mans" for "Hershey Bar" represents somebody's half-hearted attempt to anglicise the transcripts. Why?

Professor Garvey, who has written on "Play" in the same series, wields a leaden pen: "Talk is a very complex activity. Like other human activities, it

unfolds in time . . . It occurs somewhere, at some time, in among certain people (or perhaps from a solitary person) engaged in doing something or several things." But of course, no weight of platitudes, no cumbersome classification of communication channels and facilitation-systems, can wholly crush the life out of this data. Whether the findings strike us as predictable or surprising, it is worth scrutinizing verbal manoeuvres within nurseries and the roles adopted in games of make-believe; worth noting that care-givers, chatting to babies, instinctively treat even a burp or a chortle as a turn in the exchange; worth reporting that, at a later stage, polite requests tend to be addressed to fathers, while imperatives serve to order mothers about.

The investigation of language in the very young is bedevilled by problems of definition and coordination. How can scientific teams standardize their procedures, ensure consistency in their analysis of utterances, or even agree as to what counts as an utterance? Paradoxically, the turgid abstractions of this disappointing book may give heart to individual enthusiasts who have few scholarly pretensions but ample opportunity to document infant speech acts, as it were, in the wild. Where so little is known, much can be done by amateurs. Words spoken on impulse, in the midst of spontaneous activity or at ease in familiar routines, are surely more likely to shed light upon the mysterious evolution of linguistic processes and purposes than experiment such as Thomas Thiemann's, respectfully cited here, in which toys were made to repeat and then recall the sentence: "The bird sat in the tree and it sang a song." How symbolically apt it turns out to be that the microphones in Professor Garvey's laboratory-playroom was concealed beneath a stuffed parrot!

Marion Glastonbury

Prepare to be parents

Child Studies: Child Care and Development from Birth to Seven Years. A Two Year Course. By Tania Werner. Batsford £8.95.

Remaining a successful and self-confident parent today is not easy, now the goals of childhood have changed from mere physical survival to something approaching an ideal of total fulfilment. With so many more areas of a child's progress to worry about, preparatory child studies at school level aimed at both sexes should obviously be now play an important role, acting as counter-weights either to unreal expectations or else to unjustified fatalism about early development. Yet satisfactory pupil preparation for later to their sex-roles in spite of their parents, the children of women doctors do not believe that women can be doctors, and hairy arm men that you're smart. Though it is clearly impossible to bring children up without a culture, in order to see how their sexuality would show itself, it is a pity that someone who writes as skillfully as Sara Stein should be unable to take a more objective view of the world.

More recently, a number of brave attempts have been made to improve on this picture, from the running of infant play-groups in secondary schools manned by the pupils themselves to ambitious series of talks and visits. Now Tania Werner, a comprehensive school teacher from Brighton, has compiled an excellent source book

for ideas on the subject, informed throughout by one effective notion. Rather than get pupils to think about children and childhood in the abstract, she encourages them to remember and describe their own younger selves. If any doubt the practicality of this, they should read extracts from pupils' writing contained in these pages. Descriptions of sibling jealousy, marital bickering, spells in hospital or sheer, wanton mischief come across more vividly than would the same pupils would ever produce more self-consciously in their English lessons.

Handling such material can be disturbing and occasionally explosive, but where the teacher is concerned, but the advice given on how to do this and what other topics to cover is unfailingly sensible. Described as a two-year course, there is in fact enough here to keep a class going for a far longer period. Any teachers, meanwhile, uncertain themselves about particular areas of child development will find there are many opportunities provided for their own learning, since Tania Werner never shuts the direct approach, whether it comes to explaining the details of the birth experience, why children play or ways to help infants starting school. My only quarrel is with her publisher: why must such a useful and appealing book be saddled with ridiculously small print and a quality of paper and binding too cheap for its or anyone else's own good?

Nicholas Tucker

Changing Christianity

Christian England: Volume Three - From the Eighteenth Century to the First World War. By David L. Edwards. (Collins £12.95. 0 00 215143 X) completes David Edwards's ecclesiastical history of Christianity in England. Volume Three covers the lasting effects of the Evangelical revival on church, national, international and political life. Influence of the Oxford Movement and the rise of secularism.

John James

Chiaro scuro world

Peter Ackroyd is one of our most original new novelists: two of his books are now published by Abacus (£2.50 each). The Great Fire of London is a curious meditation on the Last Testament of Little Dorrit. The Last Testament of Little Dorrit is a virtuosic exercise in literary empathy, a stylistic surrealism, only occasionally marred by camp. In the novel, which Ackroyd enters a chiaroscuro world shot through with guilt and exaltation.

Michael Church

BOOKS

Towards a world view

The Modern World since 1917. By Philip Saulson. Blackwell £2.95. 0 631 91470 6.

Twentieth Century World History in Focus. By Harry Mills. Macmillan £3.50. 0 333 28662 6.

Evidence in Question. World Affairs from the Russian Revolution to the Present. By K. Rayner, R. Stapley, J. Watson. Oxford University Press £2.25. 0 19 91329 2.

Success in Twentieth Century World Affairs. By Jack Watson. John Murray £4.50. 0 7195 4068 2.

The Cold War. By Hugh Higgins. Heinemann Educational £4.95. 0 435 31395 9.

The Origins of the Cold War. By Martin McCauley. Longman £1.95. 0 582 35388 2.

The trend towards world history for first public examinations continues and so does the flow of world history books to service it. Most of them seem to start with Europe, and quite rightly, for how can you gain a world perspective without, like Aristotle, a place to stand?

The Modern World since 1917 is a history map book, presenting events with a strong emphasis on the visual - graphs, charts and diagrams as well as maps. There are also "Time Lines" more lists than lines, which are useful for locating events in time as the maps are for locating them in space; both are strikingly well conceived, and successfully provide both the key to understanding, and its context. There is just enough text to supply background and details, and each topic based double-page spread is completed by a box containing questions.

The double-page format is also adopted by *Twentieth Century World History in Focus*, a solid coursebook, more than twice as thick as *The*

Modern World, with a more conventional emphasis on the textual rather than the graphic approach. It's well illustrated though, and includes in each topic three or four short pieces of evidence, verbal or visual, with a list of questions based directly on them. This is certainly another welcome addition to the world history list, scoring over the map book in coverage, if perhaps not in impact. Have both if you can.

But neither separately nor together will they equip your candidates to answer all the questions in the latest addition to the popular and useful *Evidence in Question* series. Sired by the same examiners and markers as before and out of the same stable, similarly designed for practice in the kind of document work required in public examinations, this one seems not to have bred true. It's much harder. "What evidence is there in the three passages to suggest that the Cold War was largely an ideological struggle?" "What does the speaker mean by the passage by . . . 'A revisionist line', 'bourgeois elements', 'the dictatorship of the proletariat'?" It's not that it's impossible for 15 to 16-year-olds to understand these concepts, but explaining them and applying them is something else again. And what proportion of 15 to 16-year-olds can easily identify and describe the "tone" of a passage? Ask their English teachers. These are interesting questions, but if there's any indication of what's going to hit the entire ability range at GCSE, they could spell disaster.

For a level, Jack Watson's *Success in Twentieth Century World Affairs* is still going strong and has now appeared in a third edition. The "Success in" title with its connotations of a crib doesn't do justice to the depth of analysis and breadth of coverage in these pages. There are maps, cartoons, and photographs; there are reading

lists and exercises after every chapter; and for sheer organization Mr Watson is unrivalled.

Hugh Higgins' *The Cold War* was well worth another edition, too. This second edition has a new chapter on "Detente and a new cold war", taking events into the 1980s and providing the opportunity for extending criticism of the American hard line on Russia, whose roots in the Truman era Mr Higgins considers must bear much of the responsibility for the beginning of the Cold War, and whose resurgence after a brief period of Nixonian - and thus discredited - detente must do the same for its continuation today. Misinformation by the media on both sides about the adversary's military strength has helped to foment the hostility which led the American Congress, for example, to refuse to ratify the SALT II agreement. The nuclear situation is horrendous; leaders on both sides have failed us; the single tenuous hope is improbably offered only by mass movements of ordinary people.

In Longman's Seminar Studies series, Martin McCauley presents a more balanced, if less cogent view of the cold war. Alongside the revisionist view taken by Mr Higgins is presented both the traditional American view that the USSR actually is interested in taking over the world, and the "post-revisionist" idea that the cold war was inevitable given the tensions arising from conflicting ideologies, and in the aftermath of the Second World War and the development of nuclear weapons. The best thing about this book is its classic cold war documents: Ambassador Kennan's "Long Telegram", Churchill's "Iron Curtain" speech and Stalin's reply, Molotov's condemnation of American economic imperialism and the Truman Doctrine's ideological expansionism.

Jessica Saraga



David overcomes his fear of the sea by imagining, with the aid of a conch shell, that his room is awash with sea water. Here he is enjoying the experience in a sea in his bedroom (Hamish Hamilton £4.95). This is a familiar child's fantasy brought happily to life.

CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

English Fairy Tales. By Joseph Jacobs. Illustrated by Margery Gill. Bodley Head £4.95. 0 370 01023 X.

Rum Old Tales for children and other lively folk. By Gordon Jackson. Agill Press. 1 Stonefield Avenue, Lincoln, 90p paperback.

Joseph Jacobs engaged his fellow folklorists when he began to alter, conflate and in some cases bowdlerize his sources in his retellings for children. He defended himself with verve: "I had a sense at heart as sacred as our science of folk-lore - the filling of our children's imaginations with bright trains of images."

To our loss, Jacobs never produced the scholarly, textually pure, annotated edition of English folktales that he projected. But it is our inestimable gain that it should have been he who shaped for each future generation of English children the classic narrations of their native oral fictions. For in Jacobs the scholar and the storyteller met in rare conjunction. His ability to capture on the page the cadences of

spoken English was acute, while his knowledge of the material - and his respect for it - was second to none. To be sure his decisions - such as turning "Yallery Brown" from a story told as a personal experience into one set in "Once upon a time" - are sometimes questionable, but in general his feel for story is that of a master carpenter for seasoned timber. His *English Fairy Tales* (1890) and *More English Fairy Tales* (1894), two of the essential books for English child's bookshelves, are now made available in one paperback volume. J. D. Batten's illustrations are replaced by decorative headpieces by Margery Gill, but Jacobs's texts are complete and untouched.

How much we owe Jacobs is simply shown in the case of "Jack and the Beanstalk", the archetypal English folktale. The version in Jacobs is lively, funny, compelling. It is the version we all know. To turn from it to the chapbook texts is to exchange fresh spring water for the chemical recycles of the tap. Yet pedants might argue that Jacobs's text has no warrant, and is not even English. His laconic note reads: "I tell this as it was told to me in Australia, somewhere about the year 1850." In 1850 Jacobs was six years old. There is no reason to doubt that his nurse did tell him some version of the story, or that some touches of his text derive from her, but

this is certainly far from the folklorist's ideal of a verbatim transcript. Yet how much better it is than anything else we have! To reject it as inauthentic is to reject enjoyment as the justification of story.

A brief comparison with a pamphlet of tales written and privately printed by Gordon Jackson, *Rum Old Tales for children and other lively folk*, is illuminating. For though Jackson's stories may start, "Long, long ago, when the earth was very young, and the stories were told to the children of the earth, there was an old woman who had nothing to call her own but a big, idle, good-for-nothing boy called Jack", they rarely sustain one (line throughout, and never match the strict and tested structure of the traditional tales. Developed for and with a class of children, they strain hard to catch the tone of the speaking voice, with varying success. The ghost stories, "Fellow Travellers", and "Home from the Sea", in which Jackson uses the narrating voice to draw a picture of the narrator as well as tell a tale, are the best. Gordon Jackson's stories are worth seeking out as an interesting experiment in the creation of new tales from a folk tale base, but their chief effect on me is to send me back with renewed admiration and appreciation to Jacobs.

Nell Philip

Exploring a medieval mental map

Here be dragons. Most of *The Travels of Sir John Mandeville* (Penguin £2.95) took place somewhere in the author's head. Written in the fourteenth century by (so it is supposed) an Anglo-Norman knight, *The Travels* represent both a medieval map of the late medieval world and an examination of European culture and values that still seems relevant for all the unreliability of the information. Essentially the kind of stuff Othello used to chat up Desdemona and thus to be taken no more literally than a present day travel brochure.

Brian Morton

Here and now

Success in British History since 1914. By Jack Watson. John Murray £4.50. 0 7195 3924 2.

United Kingdom: A Social and Economic History of Modern Britain. By John Wilkes. Cambridge University Press £5.95. 0521 28280 2.

Success in British History since 1914 is not about success in British History since 1914. It is in fact a general history of modern Britain in which political, economic, social and cultural developments are covered right up to the Falklands War of 1982. The success will be yours if you read the book carefully. It is one of a series published by John Murray. "Success Study Books" are designed to give you the maximum enjoyment and sense of achievement in any subject you choose. They are also invaluable for exam work and pre-degree course reading.

Setting aside the trite reflection that most textbook writers subscribe to these aims, perhaps we should first discuss whether the book fulfils them. Certainly it has many merits. Jack Watson's canvas is a large one. He packs in a vast amount of information and analysis, and writes clearly, attractively and objectively. It is difficult to quarrel with the author's handling of such controversial episodes as the Suez Crisis of 1956. When, however, in his discussion of the Falklands War Mr Watson suggests that "a substantial minority of the British people was troubled that such a way of settling colonial disputes could still occur in the 1980s", I doubt if he is right. Similarly, Brian Faulkner, we read, "retired, giving up the unequal struggle to make Ulster Unionism more tolerant"; perhaps we should be told that he died in a hunting accident. But these are minor quibbles. One can only commend as good value Mr Watson's thorough and wide-ranging survey. There are numerous maps, pictures

and charts and helpful suggestions for further reading.

My chief criticism of *Success in British History since 1914* is that it sends me to sleep. The responsibility is entirely the publisher's since too much is packed into too restricted a space. The print is far too small. It is about the size of the introductions (but not the texts) of the Penguin Classics. 400 pages of such minute print are very hard on the eyes. Similarly, the illustrations are often not big enough. One cannot learn much from a photograph of Attlee's cabinet which measures four inches by three, nor from a page from *The Daily Mirror* where the print can only be read with a magnifying glass. The maps are also too small, nor is the fault rectified by claiming that the scales are larger than they actually are! Again, Sassoon's poem, "The General", contains seven lines, and it seems ridiculously stingy to ruin it by quoting only five of them. I also fault John Murray for not saying who Mr Watson is. All in all, he deserves better.

Cambridge University Press like-wise cannot be bothered to tell us who John Wilkes is, which is a pity. That said, I'm glad to commend *United Kingdom*: it is a pleasure to read. Mr Wilkes gives us a business-like and attractive survey of the social and economic history of Britain since 1750. The book is designed for O level, 16+ and CSE candidates, but the general reader will find much to interest and enlighten him. There is little to fault; I deplore distances in kilometres rather than miles and there is the occasional inaccuracy: the battle of the Somme, for instance, did not occur in 1917. Pictures of steam locomotives which are stationary or not even in steam represent a sadly missed opportunity of displaying one of man's most photographic works. Still, this is a splendid book. The well-selected documentary evidence includes Enoch Powell's famous "Rivers of Blood" speech, which is a hunting accident. But these are minor quibbles. One can only commend as good value Mr Watson's thorough and wide-ranging survey. There are numerous maps, pictures

Richard Wilkinson

PAPERBACKS

Suddenly, travel writing is fashionable. Great titles off the shelves. Some of it, like many titles in the *Century Seafarers* series (all £4.95), rather specialized. While some might enjoy harking back to an adolescent romanticism with John Masfied's *The Bird of Dawning*, nineteenth century tales like Lady Brassey's *A Voyage in the Sunbeam* or Joshua Slocum's *Sailing Alone Around the World* make heavy weather. More engagingly, the *Century Travellers* (also £4.95 each) are edited with George Miller and Isabel and the Sea, a faintly hilarious account of a trip through the canals of France into the Mediterranean to Greece undertaken immediately after the war. Mr Miller is a perfect English gentleman, and his

and his catch is his castle.

The indomitable Freya Stark strides through two volumes of her autobiography - *Travellers' Prelude* and *Beyond Euphrates* (£4.95 each) - also in the *Century* series, taking us up to her fortieth year. Considering all the revelations of the insensitivities and chaos of her family life, it's a wonder Ms Stark stopped at the Middle East. Her mother married her younger daughter off to the man she herself had been unconsciously in love with for 20 years, to see her bear six children only one of whom survived to the present day and die herself of puerperal fever at 26 - which Mother seems to have

regarded as a real nuisance. Freya remained single.

Yet more indomitable, Mme Alexandra David-Neel was the first Western woman to penetrate Tibet. In *Vinago's reissue of My Journey to Lhasa* (£5.50) you can share the incredible series of adventures which the 55-year-old woman encountered, never once shedding her disguise as a lama or her faith in Buddhism. Lama Anagarika Govinda's *The Way of the White Clouds* (Rider £3.95) transcends the genre of travel book in a wonderful reverie on the arts, history, religion and landscape of Tibet as experienced by an Indian devotee.

It is hard to capture the spirit of a place through the description of one's own impressions. Though written in 1967 John Lincoln's observations in *One Man's Mexico* (Century £4.95) remain as fresh and true today as when they were written and the book throws open a window on another hemisphere. Unfortunately, more celebrated writers give us less. Patrick Leigh Fermor's reminiscences of *A Time of Gifts* (Penguin £2.95) are a tolerably amusing, youthful trek through Hitler's Europe, but his evocation of Roumel (Penguin £2.95) is a pale tribute to Kazantzakis with far too much of the author on view. As for Calcutta (Penguin £2.95), Geoffrey Moorhouse tells us nothing that a standard history book and a preface of the Indian Press would not have done with less palaver.

Victoria Neumark

Dramatic gap

The Rise of English Drama to 1600. By A. M. Kinghorn. Volturn Press £10.00. 0 85606 105 0.

This is a new edition, with the addition of a glossary, a revised bibliography and a chapter discussing Shakespeare's four major tragedies, of *Medieval Drama*, published in 1968. That title was strained as the book contained material not truly medieval, but the present one is even more so. It is astonishing to find a book purporting to deal with drama up to 1600 entirely omitting Lyly, Greene and Kyd - to

name but three - and according Marlowe no other place than mention in relation to something or someone else. The result is a yawning gap that causes a distortion which should have been mentioned (at least) - or the title changed - since the contents as they stand, admirable though they are in themselves, do not constitute a history of *The Rise of the English Drama to 1600*.

The uninformed reader or student who consults this book will, in consequence, be misled.

Katya Watter

RESOURCES

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5 filmstrips in colour, 3 cassettes and teacher's book.

Mary Glasgow Publications Ltd, Brookhampton Lane, Kington, Warwick CV35 0JB

These productions are the result of the type of collaboration that should be most fruitful for religious education in the classroom. Two major religious education centres have used their links with teachers to provide resources which deal with themes that are central to current agreed syllabuses. Both sets offer a mix of filmstrips, cassettes and books but there are differences in concept and approach.

Christianity from the Sacred Trinity Centre at Salford is for secondary pupils and has four parts which are not obtainable separately. The aim is to



Complex patterns

Paul Turton reviews two projects for religious education

explore "the Christian response to Jesus" and not to attempt an "objective" investigation into "what Christianity really is". In the event this approach is most rigorously developed in Part 3, "I'm a believer", which has five sections in which three strands "interweave and overlap". The attempt is made to link an event in the life of Jesus with its expression or celebration in a specific denomination.

This is an imaginative but complex pattern which may be educationally confusing and lead to misunderstandings. For example, pupils might get the idea that the ministry of healing is exclusively linked to Charismatic groups or find that the mix of visuals and words about the Kingdom blurs their perceptions. Part 2 contains a useful section on the Jewish background followed by an excellent collection

of art works illustrating ideas about Jesus through the years. The succeeding history sections cover a long period succinctly though the final part dealing with the last 500 years is less well balanced. The fourth section, "Christianity Alive", offers stimulating ideas about contemporary Christian attitudes.

Visual and audio quality is good though the music is jarring and the

voices sometimes stilted. Supporting booklets are helpful but the whole may prove somewhat indigestible in the classroom. *Christianity* can be used as part of a well balanced teaching programme, helping pupils to understand specific Christian beliefs and attitudes. It may also prove valuable in church education expanding and enriching young views of the faith.

Festivals comes from the Midland Regional RE Centre and concentrates on the nature and practice of festivals which are defined as "annual celebrations, in which a community focuses its attention on an important aspect of its life".

An introductory soundtrack on the nature of festivals includes sections on Well-dressing and Remembrance day as well as key frames on the religious festivals to be studied in detail. The rich variety of religions represented in the Midland area has been used effectively in the production and the significance of each festival is interpreted through the ideas of believers. Diwali and Passover are firmly linked to specific families while Ramadan is shown in one Muslim community. Easter is seen through a number of different communities and while a variety of celebration is shown this section misses the personal impact of one family or group.

Picture quality is good throughout and the soundtracks offer an interesting mix of voices and other sounds. The teacher's book is very helpful and for each festival filmstrip there are sections on background, practice and significance as well as the provision of a script and resource list.

Users are recommended to make the strips into slides for added flexibility and each script is divided into sections for detailed teaching. Altogether a very useful resource for top primary, middle and secondary schools: further additions to the series will be very welcome.

Life and works

by David Self

The Story of Sir Moses Montefiore.
By Geoffrey Preger.
Filmstrip and cassette tape
The Jewish Education Bureau, 8 Westcombe Avenue, Leeds LS8 2BS
£16 plus 75p postage and packing.

Not everyone nowadays is perhaps able to say exactly what was distinctive about the life and works of Sir Moses Montefiore. In his time however (and he lived for over a century: 1784-1885) he was one of the best known, most respected and wealthiest members of Anglo-Jewry. He was the first president of Alliance Assurance, a director of the Provincial Bank of Ireland and of the South Eastern Railway, and a founder of the organization which brought gas lighting to the principal cities of Europe.

Having married into the Rothschilds and being a member of the Stock Exchange, he found that by the age of forty "he had accumulated what he thought was enough". He retired and spent his remaining (sixty) years in

good works in Britain and Jerusalem. He won Arab recognition for Jewish rights, founded projects that created productive work for the Jewish community and was devout in his religion.

All this is told in an audio-visual package which is never sycophantic but a masterpiece of compression, written and produced by Geoffrey Preger. We positively hurtle through the filmstrip (eighty frames in seventeen minutes) with a taped commentary that blends narration with sound effects and music from a wide variety of sources. There are one or two loose ends left unexplained, some of the illustrations do not appear to be immediately relevant and the audio quality of the review copy was less than first-rate. Even so, this is both visually and aurally a fascinating programme and the accompanying notes are comprehensive. Many secondary school heads of RE may actually feel that here, for once, is an audio-visual package worth its money. It is certainly a joy to find that it has been produced by someone who appreciates the medium.



Introduction to Buddhism
Introduction to Hinduism
Study packs from The Centre for Continuing Education, The Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes, MK7 6AA.
£12.50 and £10.00 incl of postage and packing respectively.

Each of these packs consists of an audiocassette, a Study Guide, and offprints of material, bound together in a separate volume, from the text book *Man's Religious Quest: A Reader* (edited by W Foy, Croom-Helm, London, 1977).

It takes some time to sort out what belongs where, and there is no suggested order in which the materials ought to be studied. What we have, in fact, is a scattering of material believed to be generally useful and widely accessible, and offered in a disorganised manner with the excuse that the materials constitute "resource packs".

Not that the material itself is valueless. Quite the contrary: the audiocassettes would be valuable even without the accompanying material; the Study Guides suggest some of the difficulties which face new students of the religions, and some of the key issues involved in understanding them; the extracts from the original texts are sensibly chosen; the suggestions for further reading are entirely sensible.

However, the new reader would have been enormously helped in using the material if some sort of perspective had been provided, both in the overall organisation of the pack and in its individual element: for example, the reading lists, here organised alphabetically by the authors' surnames, would have been better sorted in the order in which it is suggested that the novice read them. We do not know whether to select this selection of materials with stories relevant to the Buddha's life is integral to, and the right place for starting, any quest for understanding Buddhism, or whether it is merely an illustration of Christian notions of the importance of a religious founder.

What is worrying about the selections is the nature of the editorialising: what, for example, is gained by asserting that the story of "Gautama leaving his palace for a walk and encountering an old man, a sick man, a dead man



Shaky guide

by Prabhu Gupta

and a monk" is the "dramatization" in "symbolic episodes" of "the spiritual aspect of the decision to abandon the world". This, clearly, is what is believed by the OU's editorial team, but does the interpolation of their beliefs make the new reader's task any easier? Are we to go along with what makes "understanding easier" even if it possibly falsifies the nature of the material thus supposedly understood? But this is the problem, in my view, not merely with these sets of material in particular, it is a general problem with what appears to be the consensus in the whole of Western scholarship about how it approaches religion, as well as

individual religions. These are large issues to raise in the context of two humble sets of resource materials. In themselves, they suffer from having been extracted from their larger context of the OU courses to which they belong. Specifically, there are references (such as those to parts of these OU courses not included in these packs for the general public) which leave the user of these materials with the feeling that he has only half the map. But if you already have some perspective on these subjects, the packs are useful compilations of materials to use in revising or extending your knowledge.

MEDIA

Alternatives
HTV Wales 10.35 pm from Thursday Aug 23
ITV 12.30 pm from Friday August 24
Six half-hour programmes

Is the world going to hell in a handbasket? If you think so, rather than just feeling depressed, you might think of looking some alternatives. Complementary medicines, solar power, communal living, health food: ideas which surfaced in the flower-power studies have gained new credence in the last decade as people determined to form different life-styles struggled with the realities of putting "love-n-peace" into practice. HTV's informative series might also inspire despairing upturners students with its glimpse of lives where success and failure do not depend on YTS or the dole queue.

Against the dole queue the so-called Alternative Movement places the Circle Dance. As the instructor of this archaic dance-form pointed out in the first programme of the series, dance structures reflect our ideas of community. Beside the healing togetherness of the circle we can set the narcissistic solitude of the disco-dancer as an image of the alienated individual adrift from the rooted interdependence of resourceful and productive groups. It is unfortunate that the dancers in the Welsh Sacred Dance did look very soppy, and, in general, alternative types can be caricatured for their utopian idealisations - but when the alternatives to such alternatives are possibly quick death by nuclear catastrophe or slow death from environmental pollution, perhaps they deserve more attention.

The second programme in the series, on energy, examines how renewables - the energy of sun, wind, water and "biomass" (cow-dung or timber), can be used in everyday life. Conservation is vital, we are told, yet buildings continue to be put up on the most wasteful principles, masses of heat is lost from generating stations and billions of pounds are pumped into developing nuclear fuels which besides being unnecessary with current consumption levels are terribly dangerous. However, as Dr Barrett of the



The Real Thing?

by Victoria Newmark

Open University pointed out, there are massive interests vested in continuing with a status quo. Alternative Movement people tend to eschew the political and hope that by setting an example of building a merely self-sufficient community, they can influence the world.

heat is lost from generating stations and billions of pounds are pumped into developing nuclear fuels which besides being unnecessary with current consumption levels are terribly dangerous. However, as Dr Barrett of the

cient energy house, using cow-slurry instead of gas, setting up a Centre for Alternative Technology in Wales visited by 50,000 people a year - they will affect consciousness. Perhaps that is so.

In the third programme, on holistic healing, the rapidly diminishing credibility of conventional medicine is skated over. Acupuncture, osteopathy, herbalism and homeopathy are gaining ground and ventures such as the Cancer Help Clinic in Bristol which stress the spiritual as well as the physical aspects of healing are explored. For many people this will be the most interesting programme. The fourth in the series, on decentralizing education, looks at two "alternative" schools which are flourishing. The Steiner school in Pembrokeshire and the Small School in Hartland, Devon, both have a high degree of parent involvement and stress education for living over academic achievement. Happiness is valued. Does that seem strange? If so, what an odd reflection.

The last two programmes, on living communally and on the "feminine spirit" of the "new age" in contrast to the "masculine" spirit of exploitation will be further outside the ken of many viewers. The nuclear family, with variations, is still so much the norm for most people that glimpses of a genuine hippie commune still going strong may seem weird. More explicable is a housing co-operative and the Centres for Alternative Technology which functions as a business enterprise as well. "Small is Beautiful" enthused Fritz Schumacher, and the last programme attempts to show the original ideas of Schumacher. Kohr and so on, which have inspired people to try out all these alternatives. Rather a mixed bag, these ideas, from vegetarianism to tip-living, from astrology to windmills, but speaking as one who switched some time ago from Mothers' Pride to home-based wholesome bread - it's the Real Thing! Don't knock it till you've tried it.

Money matters

Save and Prosper/Money Observer Video Guides
How to make a Lump Sum Work Harder
How to plan Your Pension
£17.95
374 Wandsworth Road, London SW8.

Teachers, let's face it, are not among the world's most financially aware people - they'd be doing something else if they were.

For this reason I can recommend the new *Save and Prosper/Money Observer Video Guides*.

Presented by Peter Hobday and John Davis they use a chat and graphics format, supported by a reference booklet which contains the hard facts. Both the chat and the facts are segmented and then coordinated, the appropriate page number appearing on the screen at the start of each section.

How to Plan Your Pension is of fairly academic interest to working teachers unless they are of that increasing minority which supplements its pay with freelance work or is in the process of getting out, joining the rat race or going self-employed.

How to Make a Lump Sum Work Harder is more widely relevant and an excellent introduction to the various areas of investment. It explains the link between tax position and investment, tells the viewer how to buy shares, where to find expert advice and above all, why it is essential to be aware of market movements.

The pack doesn't give investment advice, except in the broadest terms but it does explain the options.

Susan Thomas

Unable or unwilling

Wendy Body on books for reluctant readers

skills, have so many series gone out of print and why are so few new ones being published? The answers from publishers were as follows:

"Teachers buy this type of series in single copies which means that we often don't sell enough to warrant reprints. We have to think very hard about doing it."

"I think teachers would be surprised at just how small the returns are for some of the series - even the really well-known ones."

It is impossible to argue with harsh financial realities but I do wish there were more suitable books around for older pupils who are still having problems with reading.

If selecting books for reluctant readers is one of your concerns then you may find the following recommendations of some interest. They are either recently published series or what I would describe as "best buys" in that they are series which have a strong appeal and are popular with the majority of the intended readership.

READING LEVEL EIGHT AND BELOW:
Relay Readers. Schofield and Sims. Reasonable teenage fiction which is graded into four levels (reading ages 8/4-8/4). Each level has accompanying

spirit duplicating masters. *Fronte Builders* Arnold-Wheaton. One of the handful of series that has a reading level starting at seven. Don't be put off by the series title, the stories in these ten large books aren't bad.

Spinechillers Harrap (now Nelson) four titles: *Ghosts, Monsters, Horrors, Magic and Witchcraft*. Readable non-fiction, the first two titles are easier than the others.

Spirals, Hutchinson. There have been recent additions to this compelling series including more plays. The whole series is a must.

Winners, Edward Arnold. The content of this very good little series of four books is more suited to first year secondary pupils.

Approach Trend, Ginn. Still worth having. *Red Surf* is the most powerful book at this basic reading level that I've come across.

Dinosaur Strip Books, Dinosaur. Comi-strip format, perhaps a bit young for most secondary pupils although some will undoubtedly enjoy them.

Discovery Books, Cassell, now Holt. Rinehart and Winston. Six non-fiction titles, each of four titles designed to appeal *eg Sporting Events, Magic and Mystery*.

Movieworld, Longman. Bound to

appear, these books are film stories with colour photographs. *Star Wars* and *Jaws 2* are particularly popular.

Jim Hunter Books, Methuen. Fortunately the poor man's James Bond is still going strong. Good fun and deservedly popular.

READING LEVEL 9-10
Tim, Paperbacks, Arnold-Wheaton. More superb adventures concerning the Hidden People but in paperback size. Just the thing for first years who enjoy fantasy.

Aces, Hutchinson. Just published, the first six titles in a new series which aims for quality as well as appeal. A good mix of content and riveting covers.

Into the Past, Longman. A primary history series which is a fascinating read for lower secondary pupils *eg At School in the Fifties*.
Galaxies, Longman. Highly readable non-fiction to tell you everything you ever wanted to know about *Blue Jeans or Fast Food* for example.

Perhaps if we had more books like these on our shelves, together with the favourites like *Bullseyes* (Hutchinson), *Knockouts* (Longman) and *Yargo* (Edward Arnold), we would have fewer secondary school pupils for whom reading is something devoutly to be missed.

Wendy Body is Area Tutor, Bristol Reading Centre, Avon Service For Special Educational Needs and author of Books for Reluctant Readers (available from The Centre for the Teaching of Reading, 29 Eastern Avenue, Reading RG1 5RU).

notes

CRAFT PACKS
Trylon Ltd have introduced a selection of activity packs for craft education. The Junior Schools Art and Craft Activity Pack is for children between the ages of seven and 12 and contains materials and instructions for stone plaster casting, plaster casting, simple mould making and general modelling. It costs £24 excluding VAT and carriage.

Introduction to Plastics is for 12-16 year olds, and contains materials and instructions for activities including vacuum forming, acrylics and dip coating. It costs £59.50 excluding VAT and carriage. Further information on these and other packs from: Trylon Ltd, Thrift Street, Wollaston, Northants.

DISCOPTION
Research Machines have announced a Winchester disc unit for the 3802 micro. The addition of the unit would add from 10 to 40 megabytes of memory to the system which would open the door to far more applications. The Winchester is supplied with a special version of CP/M which is compatible with current non-Winchester versions. Owners of the single density 3802 can have their machines upgraded at a cost of £200 when buying a Winchester.

Further information from Research Machines Microcomputer Systems, Mill Street, Oxford OX2 0BW.

ACORN SHOW
The Acorn User Show is changing in character, to the detriment of the ordinary user it seems. There does remain a substantial group of suppliers offering useful games and other software, discs, printers etc, often at worthwhile discounts to shop prices. However, there are a large number of specialist companies and distributors looking for the very few specialist sophisticated users to whom their product is specifically aimed. It is no longer essentially a day out for parents and children or even most teachers, who would be lost at about a third of the stalls. Perhaps the time has come to split the show into one for the experts and one for the family, the schools and other beginners.

4 TELEVISION PROGRAMME RECORDING

Advance Information of Programmes Available For Recording For The Month of September, 1984

Date	Time	Programme	Fee Code
September 3rd	18.30	Well Being	Fee Code B
September 5th	18.30	Splash	Fee Code A
September 7th	18.30	Trax Trix	Fee Code A
September 9th	22.30	Food For Thought	Fee Code Z
September 10th	18.30	Well Being	Fee Code B
September 12th	18.30	Splash	Fee Code A
September 14th	20.30	Diverse Reports	Fee Code B
September 16th	22.30	Food For Thought	Fee Code Z
September 18th	18.30	Trax Trix	Fee Code A
September 20th	22.30	Food For Thought	Fee Code Z
September 22nd	18.30	Well Being	Fee Code B
September 24th	18.30	Diverse Reports	Fee Code B
September 26th	22.30	Food For Thought	Fee Code Z
September 28th	18.30	Trax Trix	Fee Code A
September 30th	22.30	Food For Thought	Fee Code Z

A Licensing Scheme to enable the recording off-air of TV programmes for Educational and Training purposes. The scheme commenced on 1st May 1984.

Educational and training institutions, continuing education centres and community groups may register to record designated television programmes transmitted by Channel 4 TV for use for educational, training and study purposes.

Only designated titles may be recorded by those licensed to record. Annual fees are payable for each programme. A Fee Code is shown alongside each title and a fee scale is published by Guild. To Register contact Guild Learning at the address below.

Date	Time	Programme	Fee Code
September 17th	18.00	Well Being	Fee Code B
September 19th	20.30	Diverse Reports	Fee Code B
September 20th	20.30	Blood of The British	Fee Code A
September 21st	18.00	Trax Trix	Fee Code A
September 23rd	20.30	A Week in Politics	Fee Code B
September 25th	20.30	Food For Thought	Fee Code Z
September 27th	22.30	Food For Thought	Fee Code Z
September 29th	18.00	Well Being	Fee Code B
September 31st	22.30	Blood of The British	Fee Code A
September 31st	20.00	A Week in Politics	Fee Code B
September 31st	22.30	Food For Thought	Fee Code Z

* Please note that fee code Z = Zero rating - i.e. No programme fees are payable on these titles
+ Anticipated transmission time. Please check actual transmission time in the TV Times
If you receive SIC, please check broadcast times as these may vary.



TV Recording Licence, Dept.
GUILD LEARNING
Guild House Peterborough PE2 8PZ
Telephone (0733) 631122

The knowledge we have lost in information

In the light of the new emphasis on information skills, J.J. Wellington asks what kind of knowledge we now need

"Girl number twenty, unable to define a horse!" said Mr. Gradgrind for the general behoof of all the little pitchers. "Girl number twenty possessed of no facts in reference to one of the commonest of animals! Some boy's definition of a horse. Bitzer, yours."

"Quadruped. Graminivorous. Forty teeth, namely twenty-four grinders, four eye-teeth, and twelve incisives. Sheds coat in the spring; in marshy country, sheds hoofs too. Hoofs hard, but requiring to be shod with iron. Age known by marks in mouth." Thus (and much more) Bitzer.

"Now, girl number twenty," said Mr. Gradgrind. "You know what a horse is."

Thomas Gradgrind's cry of "what these children need is facts" is now being replaced by many with the plea that what children need is "information skills".

Information is often described as the key resource of the future, a valuable commodity which can be bought and sold. To possess information is seen as the sure way to success. This skill will involve the human abilities to collect, prepare, code and retrieve information, in conjunction with the endless capability of new information technology to process and communicate this information.

This new emphasis on information skills in education is notable not only for the tremendous possibilities which it opens up for the future. It also re-opens a question which thinkers have been trying to answer for over 2,000 years: what knowledge is of most worth? While looking at this question I hope to argue that information skills may form a necessary, but never a sufficient basis for planning a school curriculum.

The question has intrigued yet eluded philosophers from the Sophists of Ancient Greece to the Oxford Philosophers of the twentieth century. One of the latter, Gilbert Ryle, crystallized a simple yet vital distinction in 1949 which throws light on the questions about knowledge raised by new information technology. Ryle distinguished between "knowing how" and "knowing that". A person can know how to ride a bike, mend a puncture, swim, or repair a leak. He can know that Paris is the capital of France, the Battle of Hastings occurred in 1066, or that Mercury is the planet nearest the

With each successive cutback in the educational budget, there must be a fast-growing awareness among most teachers in Britain that the financial restrictions experienced now will in all probability be superseded by even greater constraints in the future.

In the humanities, reliance upon just one or two standard textbooks is nowadays far less acceptable than before. More diverse alternative sources are usually felt to be desirable. Having different sources of information enables pupils to make their own choices and to be more selective and critical.

The school in which I teach, makes wide use of our local Young People's Library Service, borrowing project packs of books that cover several of the topics we teach in humanities to supplement books already in the school. A teacher trying to use a wide variety of different books instead of set textbooks often finds too few books meet all the requirements of a particular course. Even together they do not cover sufficient salient points.

In mixed ability classes this problem is compounded. The text in the books available on specific subjects is frequently unsuitable.

Sun. Ryle's distinction is an obvious and simple one. His achievement was to state it in words and then to apply it.

The distinction focuses perfectly on the school curriculum. Clearly, at present, the bulk of the curriculum is concerned with knowledge that. To save going into detail here, analyse for yourself how much of your own subject area is concerned with knowledge that? How much is concerned with knowledge how. Then try a quick mental journey through the subjects you were taught in secondary school: geography, history, science, English literature, and so on. What is the ratio of knowledge how to knowledge that? Obviously the ratio is far healthier in the primary curriculum - indeed this must be one of the reasons why the use of microcomputers has blended more

— then education will surely be de-based. This is the main point I wish to state in this article, and I will try to argue for it briefly with the observations below.

First, it is an obvious fact, but worth stating, that thought involves far more than the processing of information. This model of thought appears to be gaining credibility, perhaps by accident, with the growing literature and discussion of artificial intelligence.

The idea of the human brain as an information-processor forms a poor basis for a curriculum or an education for the future. To regard the brain solely as an information-processor is to debase human thinking.

Second, thought is a creative, imaginative and above all a personal process. This point was best expressed by Michael Polanyi in *Personal Knowledge*.

Where is the life we have lost in living?
Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge?
Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?

T. S. Eliot *Choruses from the Rock*

easily into the daily life of the primary school.

The "knowledge that" dominance of the secondary school curriculum has been under attack for a number of years now, with increasing emphasis on the skills and processes involved in, for example, geography, science, and history education. This change in emphasis will surely accelerate as the possibilities for the employment of "information skills" continue to grow. To put it crudely, why should pupils store masses of facts inside their heads if they can acquire the ability (the "knowledge how") to retrieve such facts from a database? In other words, the skill of information retrieval would replace the dominance of factual recall in the secondary curriculum.

Any move to redress the balance between "knowledge how" and "knowledge that" in the school curriculum is surely a welcome one, particularly where "knowledge that" involves what Whitehead called *inert ideas*. But if the move towards "knowledge how" leads to the domination of information skills in education — with the collection, retrieval and handling of information as the dominant model

ledge (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1958). Polanyi presented the notion of "tacit knowledge" — knowledge that somehow exists and is constantly being shaped within a person but cannot be described or verbalised. Tacit knowledge joins together what we know with what we feel and experience — only this can lead to full "understanding".

In other words knowledge is *personal*, involving a mixture of feelings, emotions, and responses to previous experiences. Two simple examples of personal knowledge might be the ability (Ryle's "knowing how") to ride a bike or the ability to play cricket strokes.

Both types of knowledge are personal, and often harmed by attempts to verbalise and analyse them (eg the test-match cricketer who tries to analyse his own batting technique). The tacit or personal knowledge described by Polanyi is one of the most valuable aspects of human life and therefore of the school curriculum and education. Yet it will remain untouched by an education based solely on information skills.

Finally, a sort of hierarchy having data and information at the bottom, with knowledge and (later) wisdom at

not involve the *passive* handling and acquisition of information. Human beings are not information absorbers any more than they are information processors. Active and meaningful learning involves selecting, interpreting and transforming information according to the learner's previous experiences, present needs, pre-conceived ideas, knowledge and hypotheses. Information handling is not done with a completely open mind any more than scientific observation is, a point first made by Sir Karl Popper.

Information retrieval is *theory laden*. So in addition to so-called "information skills" the learner will require these previous ideas, experiences, and hypotheses. Those are the true concern of education. An educated person will also require the ability and previous knowledge to *think about* the information itself, and the ability to examine and question the source of that information. Perhaps these two abilities should be incorporated into any definition of information skills.

Finally, a sort of hierarchy having data and information at the bottom, with knowledge and (later) wisdom at

the top is suggested by an often quoted piece of T. S. Eliot's poetry: Where is the life we have lost in living? Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge? Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?

(T. S. Eliot: *Choruses from the Rock*) The question of what knowledge is of most worth has never been answered — but it is clearly not the ability (the "knowledge how") to handle information. A consideration of the question should surely form the basis for any curriculum planning. Perhaps Gilbert Ryle should have added a third category to his knowledge how and knowledge that: knowledge *why*. Why should a person acquire this piece of information, or that piece of knowledge? What knowledge is most useful and most relevant to a 16-year-old leaving school?

Let information skills form an essential element in planning the curriculum of the future, but let's remember how limited these skills are when seen as part of a general education, and where they lie in Eliot's hierarchy.

The *Concept of Mind*, Ryle G (Hutchinson, 1949)

include those able to express themselves in writing but others who are skilled in art or photography, or able to devise computer programs, tapes, or slide sequences. Updating of material occurs naturally as new material is submitted to supplement or replace that already used. Contributions on particular themes could be encouraged.

This scheme could lead to a much more effective exchange of ideas among teachers and help to formulate a more unified approach in different schools, the basis of a common core curriculum that was not imposed but generated naturally from within the schools themselves.

There might be one particular criticism levelled at it, however. Any selection of work can lead to bias or be construed as a form of censorship, but this is the case with any provision of resources. One safeguard would be to ensure that the scheme described was staffed mainly by teachers (but not necessarily exclusively so) and that all concerned represented a broad spectrum of opinions and attitudes.

There is a vast untapped resource of able "people" in schools, many with particular talents which they could employ more fully, given the chance and proper appreciation and encouragement. This would not only



The Tell Me a Story leaflet emphasises the importance of a happy relaxed atmosphere for story telling

Tell me a story

Barrie Wade describes an experiment which shows how important parents are in developing children's ability to make sense of the world through stories

you've come back" or "I want my dinner." Language is thus capable of referring to past and future events as well as those in the immediate present. Stories give children the power to speculate and hypothesize about possible happenings as well as shaping events in the past and organizing present experiences. Once a child has a story, it exists to be reflected on, reworked, adapted, modified or retold.

In school when we encourage children to tell anecdotes or to retell stories we are therefore enabling them to engage in a profitable, natural process which develops their spoken language. Retelling also enables children to become familiar with the conventions of written stories thus providing motivation and a framework for help with reading.

Telling stories to an audience builds confidence. Learners need to know that teachers are interested in what they have to say. Both telling and retelling are likely to produce more developed and fluent uses of language since children are putting into words what is known and familiar.

These, then, are some of the reasons for including telling and retelling in classroom practice. Children do not grow out of the need to begin sharing their ideas at an anecdotal level,

All learners need to make sense of things for themselves by using their own words to apply new learning to what they presently know.

Douglas Barnes in *Language, the learner and the school* describes secondary school classrooms where teachers do not give this opportunity because they are more interested in obtaining short answers to "closed" questions, that is questions to which there is only one answer (sometimes one which lies in the teacher's head that the pupils have to guess at).

Thus because the teacher never asks questions that can be answered by anecdotes, anecdotes cease to be part of their own thinking about the subject, and become "unthinkable" as contributions to class discussions," Barnes writes.

By classrooms I do not mean just those in secondary or junior schools. It is equally important to make sure in infant and nursery classes that opportunities exist for young children to learn through using language for themselves. Several recent studies have shown that the main chance a young child has to talk with adults in school is in response to direct questioning; children's possibilities for thinking and using language can be much constrained.

It is understandable that the day-to-day business of organizing large numbers of children may require much use of language that regulates behaviour, gives instructions and requires short responses. Equally time needs to be made for talk by children which is extended, reflective and exploratory. Storying and working with stories gives abundant opportunity.

To find out what can be done to encourage storying, children in ten West Midlands schools were studied over a period of two terms and this was followed up after two years. Five nursery schools and five infant/junior schools were involved.

Four to six children were randomly selected from particular teaching groups within each school. These selected groups of children were then randomly assigned in equal numbers either to a control or to an experimental group. All the children were assessed on their oral

responses to a specially written story and on a story of their own construction. This was to provide a baseline from which to measure progress.

Also a specially prepared leaflet, *Tell Me a Story*, was given to parents of all children in the experimental group, but not to control group parents. The leaflet is brief and simply written, but incorporates much of the available theory about encouraging a child's interest in story and storying, that is, making his or her own stories. It gave a consensus of the views of all the teachers participating in the project since they had revised and approved the text and lay-out.

The *Tell Me a Story* leaflet was discussed with parents of experimental group children and, where necessary, explanations and answers to questions were given. In some cases this stimulated a parent-teacher dialogue which continued throughout the study.

The main purpose of this discussion and the leaflet was to encourage parents to read stories to children and to listen to the stories children told them.

At the end of six months all children were tested again in exactly the same way. This time another specially written story was used to take account of memory.

The responses of all children were similarly transcribed, duplicated and scored and the outcomes of these analyses were compared with the results for the first story (see table).

Table: Differences in average scores between initial test (January) and final test (July)

Group	Boys	Girls	Boys and girls
Re-telling Control	-0.75	-0.83	-0.79
Story Experimental	+3.00	+2.40	+2.71
Telling Control	+0.33	+0.42	+0.45
Own story Experimental	+2.91	+3.40	+3.14
Both Stories Control	-0.21	-0.62	-0.29
Experimental	+2.95	+2.90	+2.93

On the whole, the control group roughly maintained its standard in telling self-selected stories, but its average performance level on re-telling the test story declined.

Using exactly the same methods and sample a follow-up study was conducted 18 months later to check that these gains made over a short term were maintained after the experiment. Such follow-up studies are frequently disappointing, many efforts of remediation have suffered and gains often disappear when the special experimental attention is withdrawn.

But in this case, the gains made by the experimental group over a six-month period were maintained and even extended after a further year and a half during which no controlled intervention took place.

The results emphatically demonstrate the power of parental involvement and cooperation in the learning process over a fairly short period of time. Indeed the control results suggest that many children may make little or no progress in their abilities to understand, reproduce and construct stories without it.

Since narrative is a crucial way in which young children organize their understanding of the world and the main ways in which they articulate their ideas, its role in thinking and thus in the teaching and learning of young children should not be underestimated. The results discussed point one way in which children may develop their natural and essential tools for learning and at the same time obtain some of the pleasures and satisfactions that story and storying afford.

Finally, these results show that story telling ability can develop with the passage of time, but simple maturational explanations for this are shown to be inadequate. Progress can be swift, non-existent or regressive and much depends upon a child's chance to hear, tell and re-tell stories in a one-to-one context; opportunity, encouragement and practice have considerable influence. This is a result with heartening positive implications for both parents and teachers.

Barrie Wade's book, *Story at Home and School* includes a more detailed account of this experiment, a copy of the leaflet, *Tell Me a Story*, and explores the role of story in child development further. It is obtainable price £3 (postage included) from Educational Review, Faculty of Education, University of Birmingham, P.O. Box 363, Birmingham B15 2TT.

Distribution agency

Ivan Crowe on the dissemination of resource material

This is hardly surprising considering that a large number of books a teacher might wish to use in the classroom are not written to fulfil the role of a school textbook. Emphasis may be more on entertainment than information, or education presentation will be one-sided, content incomplete and above all poorly indexed.

One answer to these problems is the selection and duplication of suitable material from a number of sources, but copyright constraints usually preclude this. The alternative is for individual schools to prepare material, but this is not only very time consuming, it is equally likely to result in a particular bias, reflecting the teacher's own viewpoint. However, writing texts and worksheets is often the only way a teacher can provide enough varied material to suit a wide ability range and it can be reproduced when needed without infringing anyone else's copyright.

Each group participating would be allocated an identifying number that would be printed on each sheet of their

With time and money now scarce, it would seem sensible to try and disseminate some of the resource material that is already being produced by teachers themselves. Ideally this would have to be through some central agency that could allow useful contributions to be redistributed and used more widely by teachers elsewhere.

With the right facilities, copies could be made of any suitable work submitted by teachers and dispatched, either to individual schools or education authorities who would pay a fee to opt into the scheme the number of pupils within a school or i.e.a. determining the financial contribution required.

Any i.e.a. joining the scheme could be rewarded by individual schools who had joined earlier deducted from the authorities' total subscription. Each group participating would be allocated an identifying number that would be printed on each sheet of their

master copy giving them authority to duplicate from their particular copy. Only work not displaying a correct number for a particular authority, institution, or establishment would constitute an infringement of copyright. I would be hoped to avoid the normal problems of copyright by these means.

Such a scheme could lead to overall savings — subscription might be covered by money saved on purchasing books. Teachers whose work is accepted could be paid a percentage of each fee paid by those opting in. Maybe only a nominal sum at first, becoming more realistic as the scheme is more fully implemented.

There is a vast untapped resource of able "people" in schools, many with particular talents which they could employ more fully, given the chance and proper appreciation and encouragement. This would not only

include those able to express themselves in writing but others who are skilled in art or photography, or able to devise computer programs, tapes, or slide sequences. Updating of material occurs naturally as new material is submitted to supplement or replace that already used. Contributions on particular themes could be encouraged.

This scheme could lead to a much more effective exchange of ideas among teachers and help to formulate a more unified approach in different schools, the basis of a common core curriculum that was not imposed but generated naturally from within the schools themselves.

There might be one particular criticism levelled at it, however. Any selection of work can lead to bias or be construed as a form of censorship, but this is the case with any provision of resources. One safeguard would be to ensure that the scheme described was staffed mainly by teachers (but not necessarily exclusively so) and that all concerned represented a broad spectrum of opinions and attitudes.

There is a vast untapped resource of able "people" in schools, many with particular talents which they could employ more fully, given the chance and proper appreciation and encouragement. This would not only

Ivan Crowe

OVERSEAS continued

Posts Overseas

Yemen Arab Republic

Teacher of English as a Foreign Language
Ras Katenib Power Station, near Hodeida

Duties: To provide English Language Training for Power Station personnel under the direction of a Senior Teacher, including: testing and evaluating the English language levels and needs of staff; curriculum design, timetable, materials writing, teaching; to make a monthly progress report to the British Council.

Qualifications: Candidates should be single males, or if married they will be given an unaccompanied contract; they should have a postgraduate diploma in TEFL and ESP experience, preferably in industry. Experience of an Arab/Muslim society desirable.

Salary: On a scale £8,514 - £12,507 p.a. tax free.

Benefits: Free furnished accommodation; use of car; overseas allowances; outfit allowance; baggage allowance.

Contract: One year contract with the British Council commencing October 1984.

Closing date for applications: 7 September 1984.

NB: Telegram enquiries only on telephone 01 580 5872 extn. 62.

Reference: 84 A 108 T

Key English Language Teaching Scheme

Guinea

English Language

Teaching Adviser

Department of Letters,

University of Conakry

Duties: The holder of this new post will be responsible for arranging regular seminars on methodology for University teachers of English; advising the Head of the English Section and Department of Letters on curriculum; designing and introducing an ELT methodology course for students training to become teachers at higher education level; developing and advising on the selection of materials for use by counterparts and other University teacher trainers; advising University authorities, Ministry of Higher Education and British Council Representative on British Technical Cooperation training awards for ELT at higher education level, back presentation of ODA/British Council support for ELT in Guinea; some methodology teaching to students specialising in English.

Special Qualifications: Degree in English/Modern Languages and MA in Applied Linguistics; teaching training and materials production experience at university level essential plus at least 5 years' experience of EFL teaching overseas particularly in Francophone Africa. Good written and spoken French.

Salary: £11,061 - £15,311 per annum.

Overseas Allowance: Nil - £3,536 per annum depending on salary and marital status.

Reference: 84 K 89 T

Oman

Teacher Trainer

English Language

Teaching Unit

Ministry of Education and

Youth Affairs

Muscat

Duties: To conduct courses using materials provided by the Chief Teacher Trainer and to provide feedback on materials to assist local inspectors in their teacher training role; to advise, as necessary, on matters relating to the staffing and conduct of in-service seminars and training courses.

Special Qualifications: Candidates, male only, must have a degree in English or Modern Languages plus either a one-year TEFL qualification followed by 7 years' relevant experience or MA in Linguistics followed by 5 years' relevant experience.

Salary: £9,716 - £11,888 per annum.

Overseas Allowance: £1,190 - £3,363 per annum depending on salary level and marital status.

Reference: 84 K 29 T

Tanzania

Senior Lecturer/Reader,

Communication Skills Unit

University of Dar-es-Salaam

Duties: As senior member of team of 3 KETs to teach communication skills in English to undergraduates first year students, to assist in teaching at postgraduate level, to prepare teaching and learning materials, to coordinate courses within the faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and to undertake administrative duties as assigned in the department.

Special Qualifications: MA in Applied Linguistics; 5 years' post-MA experience including teaching at university level, publication of 3 papers in applied linguistics. Specialisation in evaluation/testing procedures desirable.

Salary: £11,061 - £15,311 per annum.

Overseas Allowance: £286 - £5,857 depending on salary level and marital status.

Reference: 84 K 13 T

Yemen Arab Republic

Assistant Teacher Trainer

(South)

Ministry of Education,

Taiz

This is one of 4 KET posts concerned with the Curriculum Implementation of the English for Yemen Project. The postholder will be responsible to the Head Teacher Trainer in Sana'a.

Duties: To lead teacher training meetings and visit teachers in schools; to make regular visits to Provincial Directors of Education and Inspectors and Council Representatives; to advise inspectors on classroom observation techniques and attend inspectors' meetings; to identify and train Yemen counterparts; to assist Head Teacher Trainer in preparing teacher training packs and summaries; in monitoring/evaluating EFL implementation; in preparing teacher training programme; in advising Media Producer and pre-service Teacher Trainers; and in advising/aiding Ministry with its examinations. To attend Project meetings.

Salary: £11,061 - £15,311 per annum.

and to report to Ministry on EFL implementation administrative matters.

Special Qualifications: In-service teacher training experience essential, plus experience of the Arab world, and some knowledge of Arabic or willingness to learn.

Salary: £9,716 - £11,888 per annum.

Overseas Allowance: £1,616 - £3,531 per annum depending on salary and marital status.

Reference: 84 K 25 T

The following post is also funded under Britain's Aid programme to developing countries:

Bhutan

Principal

Kharbandi Technical School,

Phuntsholing

Duties: (Divided in the ratio 60:40 administration to teaching.) To be responsible for overall administration of the School; to teach at all levels to improve technical standards at the School; to supervise boarding school duties; to improve existing course and introduce technical courses; to liaise with local employers and public departments to devise relevant training courses; to supervise workshops; to be responsible for procurement of food and provisions and raw materials for the courses run at the school; to be responsible for administration of the budget for equipment.

Special Qualifications: Candidates, preferably male aged 35-50, must have a degree or equivalent in an engineering subject, a recognised teaching qualification and at least 5 years' experience at secondary level of technical schools of which at least 2 should have been overseas. Boarding school experience and a knowledge of the Indian sub-continent are desirable.

Salary: £13,761 - £14,484 per annum plus a £1,001.

Reference: 84 K 41 T

General Qualifications for all above posts: Candidates must be UK citizens with a British educational background.

Benefits: Salary free of UK income tax; free family passage; children's education allowance and holiday visits; free furnished accommodation; outfit allowance; medical scheme; baggage allowance; paid leave; employer's contribution to a recognised superannuation scheme or an allowance of 11% of salary in lieu.

Contracts: Contracts will be with the British Council for 2 years initially.

Closing date for Application: 10 September 1984 for Bhutan, Oman and Yemen Arab Republic; 14 September 1984 for Tanzania; 14 September 1984 for Bhutan, Oman and Yemen Arab Republic.

For further details and an application form, please write, quoting the post reference number to: Overseas Educational Appointments Department, The British Council, 90-91 Tottenham Court Road, London W1P 0DT.

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For further details and an application form, please write, quoting the post reference number to: Overseas Educational Appointments Department, The British Council, 90-91 Tottenham Court Road, London W1P 0DT.

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SAUDI ARABIA

Male Teachers of English with Bachelor Degree and Specialized in English Language are needed for Primary School in Saudi Arabia. Salary £1,000 to £1,500 per month. Contract for 9 - 10 months. Required to teach English for further 2 years. Applicants must be single males, aged 6 - 15 years old. Further details and application form available only. Applicants must provide recent photo and Tel. No. Postbox open as of 5th Sept. 1984.

Apply with full details to: The Secretary, 29 The Cliff, Eden Lodge, Rooden, Brighton, BN1 1ST. 460000

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BRUSSELS

THE BRUSSELS SCHOOL OF ENGLISH is seeking a teacher of English for November 1984. The teacher should have a minimum of 5 years' experience and a good knowledge of the English language. The teacher will be responsible for the teaching of English to students of the school. The teacher will be paid a salary of £1,000 per month. The teacher will be required to teach English for 9 - 10 months. The teacher will be required to teach English for further 2 years. Applicants must be single males, aged 6 - 15 years old. Further details and application form available only. Applicants must provide recent photo and Tel. No. Postbox open as of 5th Sept. 1984.

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Administration Local Education Authority

continued



Buckinghamshire Education Department

Senior Education Officer

(Further Education)

Principal Officer Range

£17,463 - £19,104 p.a.

This is a third-tier post carrying wide ranging and challenging responsibilities for the administration and development of further education, the careers service and Manpower Service Commission work. Although adult education is separately administered by the County's Youth and Community Service, this post will have responsibilities for the development of open learning systems and adult training across further and adult education. Applicants should be graduates with teaching experience and experience in educational administration. Further details and application

Educational Psychologists continued

Education Department

SENIOR EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGIST

Soulbury (Burnham H.T. Group 9)
£15,027-£16,281 p.a.

An experienced Educational psychologist is required to join a team of six senior psychologists who work closely with the County Educational Psychologist in the organisation and development of the School Psychological Service in this large County.

The School Psychological Service in Essex is being reorganised to enable four of the Senior Educational Psychologists to operate as area team leaders and the remaining two to take a Countywide specialist role.

Initially, the successful applicant will be appointed to lead a team of six Educational Psychologists in the South East Area of the County based in Hadleigh or Southend-on-Sea, but opportunities will exist for the duties of specialist and area team leaders to be rotated amongst them by agreement.

As well as possessing substantial experience, appropriate qualifications and the skills necessary to lead a professional team in an area, the successful applicant will have a commitment to working constructively with senior colleagues towards the development of a well co-ordinated and effective School Psychological Service.

Application forms and further details available from the County Education Officer (P), P.O. Box 47, Chelmsford CM1 1LD. (Tel: 0246 267222, Ext. 2626).

Informal enquiries can be addressed to J. Ackley, County Educational Psychologist at the above office (Ext. 2643).
Closing date: 14th September 1984.

(3877)



Essex County Council

Education Department

Re-advertisement

AREA EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGIST

Applications are invited for the post of full-time Area Educational Psychologist to work in mid-Oxfordshire. The person appointed will work in ordinary schools, the Child Guidance Service and with special schools.

Salary - Soulbury Educational Psychologists' Scale (£10,851-£14,253) (pay award pending). Appropriate car allowance payable. Removal and disturbance expenses payable in approved cases.

Application forms and further particulars may be obtained by writing to the Chief Education Officer, Oxfordshire County Council, Maclefield House, New Road, Oxford, OX1 1NA, to whom completed forms must be returned by 14th September, 1984.

(3886)

Examiners

ROYAL SOCIETY OF ARTS EXAMINATIONS BOARD

Vacancy in the Office Studies for an ADMINISTRATOR

The Office Studies Sector is responsible for the Board's schemes in office skills, office procedures and information technology, including technical qualifications and the Diploma for Personal Assistants. An additional administrator will be appointed as soon as possible.

The duties will include administration in connection with the development, implementation of policy decisions.

Applications are invited from graduates for active ability and initiative. Following will be of advantage: experience with examining, validating body, familiarity with office world, teaching experience in this field.

The post will be based at the Board's London office, 101-103, 105-107, Strand, London WC2R 0ET. Salary: £8,000 p.a. (inclusive of London weighting). LVS and season ticket (return) £600.00.

Application forms from the Head of Office Studies, Royal Society of Arts Examinations Board, John Adam House, 101-103, 105-107, Strand, London WC2R 0ET. Closing date: 14th September 1984.

Miscellaneous

EXPANDING NATIONAL PARTY

Splendid opportunity for smart, intelligent people with dynamic personalities to become financial consultants to deal with people from all walks of life.

Excellent career training. Average income £15,000 plus annual plus usual sales incentives. 24-40 only.

Positions are available in most major cities. Please state preferred location on CV or CV since the meeting is at your own expense.

Apply now to: J. Cunningham, Library Financial Services, 2nd Floor, Bank House, Manchester M1 1PX. (061 275 1111).

Alternatives for teachers. Full-time/part-time. Export. No experience necessary. Career Publishing in Writing & Radio. £1.75 each, all three for £4.50. Send 3 to: House Publishing, Brickworth, Northampton NN4 6JH. 0604 881889. (055442) 660000.

WANTED: GRADUATE PRINTER. Teacher with interest in electronics seeking change of career.

Apply your science (and computer) skills in the new world of electronics. Tel: 0752 454416. (London) 0752 454416. (095021) 660000.

LLINDLEY EDUCATIONAL TRUST

Due to continuing expansion the Trust have applications for additional permanent teachers and their training staffs. Apply by telephone to the appropriate Centre Manager for details.

SWINTON CASTLE North Yorkshire
Tel: Roger Farbrother - 0755 89254.

HOLLOWFORD CENTRE
Castleton, Derbyshire
Tel: Roger Farbrother - 0755 89254.

Experienced teachers are required with practical experience of T.E. and S.E. programmes with regular 4 week introductory courses in the Royal Society of Arts Practical Training in Teaching English as a Foreign Language.

Tel: Chris Chilton - 043 205377.

CLAIRE YOUNG PEOPLE'S CENTRE
Masham, North Yorkshire
Tel: (09021) 700000.

Trainers who are qualified in outdoor pursuits and have experience of leading teams are invited to apply.

Tel: Bert Sheridan - 0765 89380.

OR write for details and application form indicating which centre you are interested in. The Director of Training, Lindley Educational Trust Ltd., The Old Vicarage, Castle Street, Castleton, via Sheffield, S30 2WC.

N.B. The Trust has a rich international Christian foundation and applicants should be aware of the emphasis this will have on successful applicants. (08524) 660000.

WINCHESTER HEALTH AUTHORITY

HEALTH EDUCATION AND PROMOTION FACILITATOR

A newly created post to develop health education in schools and colleges. The post holder will be a particular specialist in health education. The appointment is initially until 31st March 1985. The successful candidate, if eligible, will have the opportunity to study for a Higher degree in health education at the University of Southampton.

Applicants should be non-smokers.

Enquiries to Gillian Best, District Health Education Officer, Tel: (0862) 60661, Ext. 64.

Application forms/job descriptions from our 84 hour training service. Tel: Winchester 60600.

Closing Date: 18th September 1984. Interview: 20th September 1984. (08782) 660000.

Outdoor Education

CUMBRIA

Lakeland Training have vacancies for four Outdoor Activities and Life Skills Instructors. Applicants should have a minimum of 21 and have qualifications in a wide range of outdoor activities. A clean driving licence is essential.

For application forms and further information please write or telephone: The Director of Training, Lakeland Training, The Promenade, Arncliffe, Cambridge CB3 0AQ. (Tel: 080000 761710). (08741).

DEVON

SKERN LODGE OUTDOOR ADVENTURE CENTRE

Employment and Learning through Adventure. Multi-level specialist courses and field studies. Open all year.

Prices from £4.50 per night. THE BEST: people, activities, equipment AND value. Phone MA 7888 or write to: Mrs. M. J. ANDY on 08378 5888 or write to: S.L. Anderson, N. Devon EX38 1NG. (16788) 660000.

LOTIAN REGIONAL COUNCIL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

BENMORE CENTRE FOR OUTDOOR EDUCATION

SENIOR INSTRUCTOR

Applications are invited from registered teachers for the above post at this residential centre. Applicants should be experienced and should preferably hold a B.M.C. Qualification.

Application forms and further details may be obtained from the Director of Education, The Benmore Centre, 40 Torphichen Street, Edinburgh EH3 9JJ. (05517) 660000.

SOUTH DEVON

COURTLANDS CENTRE, Kingsbridge, S. Devon. School Journeys, Field Courses, Outdoor Pursuits, Coastal and Moorland Locations. Comfortable, comprehensive facilities, good food, licensed bar. Free preview weekends. Contact The Course Manager, Tel: 054 855 3600 (08184).

English as a Foreign Language

BOURNEMOUTH

REA COURSES AT ITTC

Learn to teach English as a foreign language at the International Teacher Training Centre, Bournemouth. The Centre runs regular 4 week introductory courses in the Royal Society of Arts Practical Training in Teaching English as a Foreign Language.

Write to: ITTC, c/o Bournemouth University, PO Box 103, Bournemouth BH1 1QJ. (09021) 700000.

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

EATON HALL INTERNATIONAL

PRELIMINARY CERTIFICATE IN TEFL

LICENTIATE DIPLOMA IN TEFL (LTCL)

DIPLOMA IN TEFL (DIP- TEFL)

A combination of Distance Learning followed by Residential courses for teachers or distance learners. The courses are listed above. Distances no problem.

Write for details to: The Registrar, Eaton Hall International, Eaton Hall, Nottingham DN55 0PR or Tel: (0777) 765441. (08528) 700000.

Computer Software Publishers seek ideas for publishable E.F.L. Programs. Please contact: EFL Service Systems, Box No. 788 08841, Priory House, St. John's Lane, EC1M 4BX. (08528) 700000.

E.F.L. Journals, Journals, school staff, the T.E.F.L. Union. Come to introductory meeting Mon 10th Sept. 6.30 p.m. at International House, 106 Piccadilly, London W1. 01-961 6731 (evenings). (08782) 700000.

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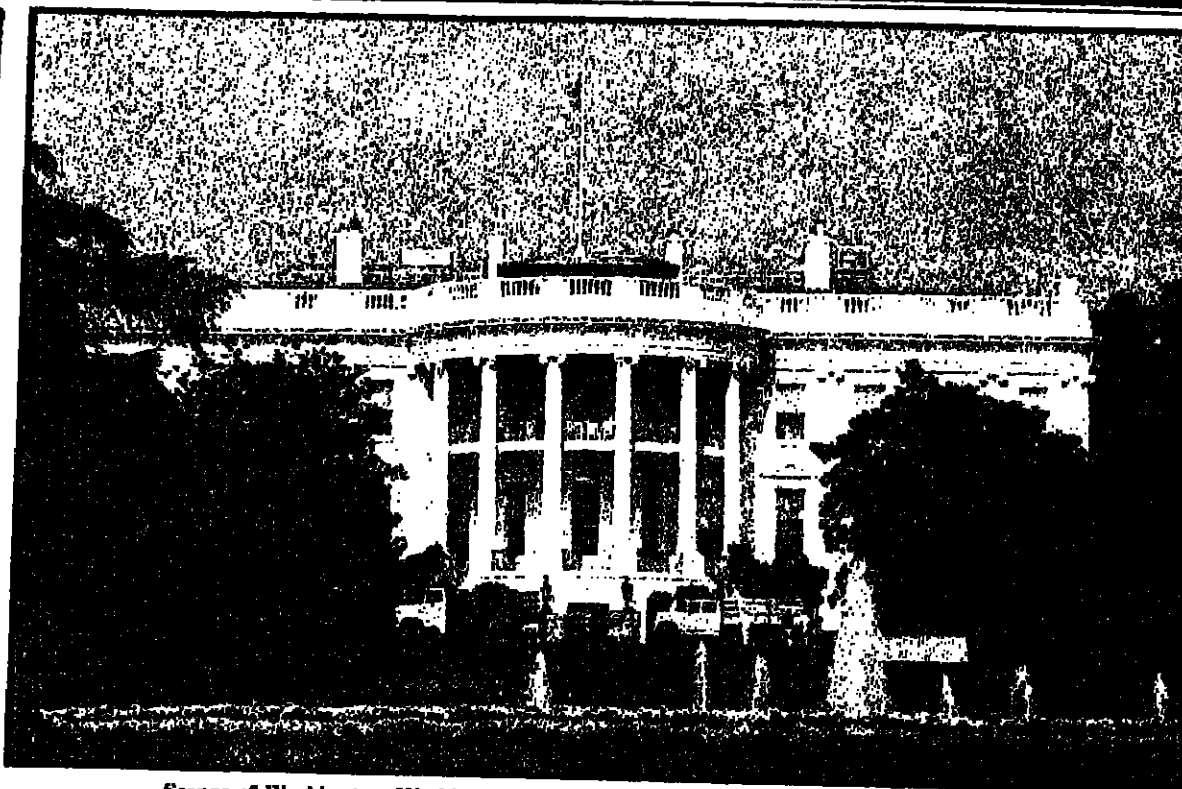
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WASHINGTON DIARY



Scenes of Washington: Washington Monument, the White House and Lincoln Memorial.

Peter David gets in among the Texas shorts and 'I love teaching' badges

Never in Blackpool...

I must have been born lucky. Why else should the American Federation of Teachers have chosen last week of all weeks to hold their annual conference in an otherwise deserted Washington? But for the would have been out of the question. The schools are closed and sensible Washingtonians have fled for the beaches. Even the press has deserted town. Except for a disgruntled few forced to spend the week reading Ms Ferraro's tax returns, the fourth estate was down in Dallas watching the coronation ("Reagan - every inch a king" announced the *New York Times*).

So it was with a sense of mingled gratitude and apprehension that I sped in a taxi through steamy streets to the AFT convention at the Washington Hilton. Apprehension because, for me, teacher conferences always evoke ambivalent memories of Fred Jarvis, Blackpool blizzards, the education correspondents, execrable pantomime and the sawdust on the floors of Yates Wine Lodge where, if memory serves me, the Rank and File used to plot daff stratagems against the Hamilton House oligarchs. The AFT, I hoped, would be different.

The federation is, of course, the AFT of America's teachers' unions. With only 600,000 members it is generally eclipsed by Hertz, the National Education Association, and its membership of nearly two million. But the two unions compete ferociously for members and squabble endlessly about microscopic doctrinal differences, a state of affairs that is obviously bad for teachers but good for the sort of people employed by *The TES*.

My first impressions were distinctly favourable. It was a pleasant surprise

to find so many delegates sprawled in the opulent Hilton lounges sipping whisky sours and Tom Collinses and looking for all the world like tourists from Texas in bright shorts and tee shirts and recognizable only by their lapel stickers and large pink badges saying "I love teaching". American conventioners, even down-trodden teachers, appear to rank pleasure above politics at least once a year.

In the grand ballroom, however, the atmosphere was more earnest. The debate as I entered focused on two questions: the chilling effects of the hotel's air conditioning and the respective powers of the federation's national headquarters and its local branches. In the United States, the local branches negotiate separate pay deals with thousands of school districts. The inevitable result is rotten pay - when they start, teachers get about \$12,000 (£9,230), just about as much as the average secretary.

Self-importance

Yet, despite its dismal bargaining performance, the AFT sees itself as an important player on the national stage. Its president, Albert Shanker, is a veteran wheeler-dealer in the AFL-CIO, America's toothless version of the Trades Union Congress. Mr Shanker promotes himself by buying space to write an article every Sunday in the *New York Times*. The federation has even launched its own television programme *Inside your schools*, which is broadcast fairly widely on public and cable television networks.

In all this self-importance justified? Partly. The union's numbers and money give it some real political clout. It sent 130 delegates to the Democratic

convention in San Francisco and it will contribute as much money as it legally can to Democratic campaign coffers as the November election approaches. So it was no real surprise when Geraldine Ferraro bolted from her tax problems grand ballroom, reminding them that she too had once been a teacher and AFT member, and promised that a Mondale Administration would make education a priority.

"I am a believer in unions," she declaimed unfashionably. "Unions are good for teachers, they are good for schools and they are good for the country."

Although the AFT luxuriates in attention from national politicians, its political influence is felt most strongly on a local level. The problem nationally is that its members do not inevitably toe the union line when voting in presidential elections. Locally, however, bad marks from the teacher unions is a liability most congressmen and senators would like to avoid.

I received an insight into the way this works from an anxious woman sitting with me at the press table. She was anxious because she covers Washington for a television station in Topeka, Kansas, but had not yet discerned much of a Kansas angle in any of the AFT debates. Admittedly, she had found a delegate from Topeka, but the delegate was too intimidated by the grand ballroom to join the debate. The most she would promise was to give her reactions, off the record. Not exactly good television.

Kansas angle

Ever chivalrous, I joined the hunt for the elusive Kansas angle and, to my surprise, found one. Towards the bottom of a pile of papers provided by the union press office lay a document entitled: *Voting record - the American Federation of Teachers rates the 98th Congress*. A Topeka, Kansas, angle looked imminent.

The voting record turned out to list every congressman and senator. After each name there appeared a sort of computer password. After the name of Senator Bob Dole of Kansas, for example, were the letters WWWWWRRWWWR. Each W means that on a given issue Senator Dole voted wrongly from the AFT's point of view. His two Rs are right votes. The good senator's bad record gave my colleague from Topeka an instant 'stare' - the local senator was being "targeted" by American teachers because of his consistently bad-voting record. In a country where politics and media are ferociously parochial, that could be a big story back in the wheatfields.

Which 12 legislative decisions did the AFT regard as important? Some were predictable - Senator Dole scored Ws for supporting tax cuts for private schools and opposing increases

in the federal budget for education. But why, I wondered, did he deserve an R for voting to make Martin Luther King's birthday a public holiday? And why give him another W for a vote leading to cuts in medicare? What had medicare got to do with teaching?

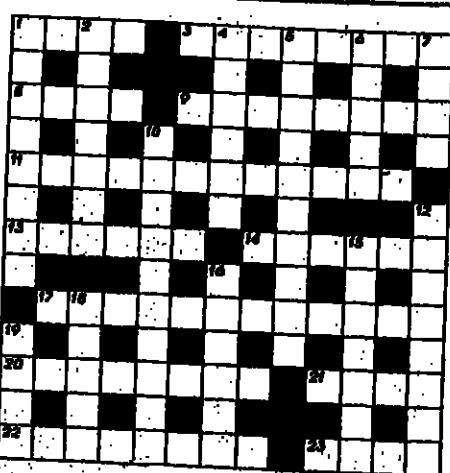
The answer lay in at least one of these questions came serendipitously, during a stroll through the conference exhibition where computer manufacturers were trying to interest teachers in their latest products. An earnest lady from Pennsylvania thrust a bunch of leaflets into my hand and bet I did not realize that 30 per cent of the members of the American Federation of Teachers were not teachers. It turns out that its rivalry with the NEA has persuaded the AFT to open its doors not only to school administrators but also nurses and other health professionals. Were their interests looked after well by the teacher-dominated union? Things could be better, said the lady from Pennsylvania.

Back in the grand ballroom, the delegates were waiting to hear a speech by Mark White, the Governor of Texas. He and an enormous entourage filed to the podium amid huge

applause. Having just persuaded his legislature to vote in hefty tax increases to pay for educational reforms, the governor is currently the darling of the AFT and he knows it. With true Texan immodesty, he declares his new legislation "one of the most sweeping educational reform packages in history". And he wins additional adulation by praising the cooperation Texas received from the Texas chapter of the AFT while denigrating the obstinacy of the NEA.

The reform package, to be honest, does not look at all bad. It includes a \$4,000 a year increase in teacher pay, new pre-kindergarten classes, a cap on class sizes and more money for poorer school districts. But the really big change, the one that shows that Texas is serious about education, is a purge of extracurricular activities that have been squeezing academic classes out of the school day. In Texas last year, one pupil missed 35 days of schools while travelling around the state showing his prize-winning chicken at state fairs and competitions. If the governor has his way, the chicken will soon come home to roost.

No 167 CROSSWORD by Rufus



Across

- 1 Learning Heather goes out to work for a living (4)
- 3 An outstanding part of a Murphy sliced a golf shot (4)
- 9 It is involved with change in education (8)
- 11 Report spurge, in trouble? Ridiculous (12)
- 13 Make an appointment about four, in case (6)
- 14 One of eight requires medical attention (6)
- 17 Shaken World Cup team found in the changing room? (6,6)
- 20 Friend returns to the side of the stage to see the birds (8)
- 21 Find an employee for drinking, perhaps (4)
- 22 Settler in Panama? (8)
- 23 Blueprint for a jail-less aircraft (4)

Down

- 1 Frack ceased being fun-

- 2 There's purpose in regular payment for clothes (7)
- 4 About a hundred new steel picks (6)
- 5 Road notice, perhaps, a job for a painter (10)
- 6 Farewell announcement that is socially acceptable (5)
- 7 Appreciate one's accommodation (4)
- 10 A certain feeling (10)
- 12 Capital investment supports the family (8)
- 15 Eccentric strange dance (7)
- 16 Figures I spoil the games (6)
- 18 A paper order to cause dismay (5)
- 19 Combined nations look into pre-Christian era (4)

Solution to puzzle No 166

